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copo Cant. a Sacris.



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DISCOURSE

About Discerning and Trying the

SPIRITS,

Wherein are laid down Rules,

SHEWING

What are the Essential and Necessary Doctrines  
and Practices of Christianity.

To which is prefixed,

The Life of Saint *Mary Magdalen de Pazzi*,  
a Carmelite Nunn.

With a Preface concerning the Nature, Causes, Con-  
comitants and Consequences of Ecstasy and Rapture.

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The Second Edition.

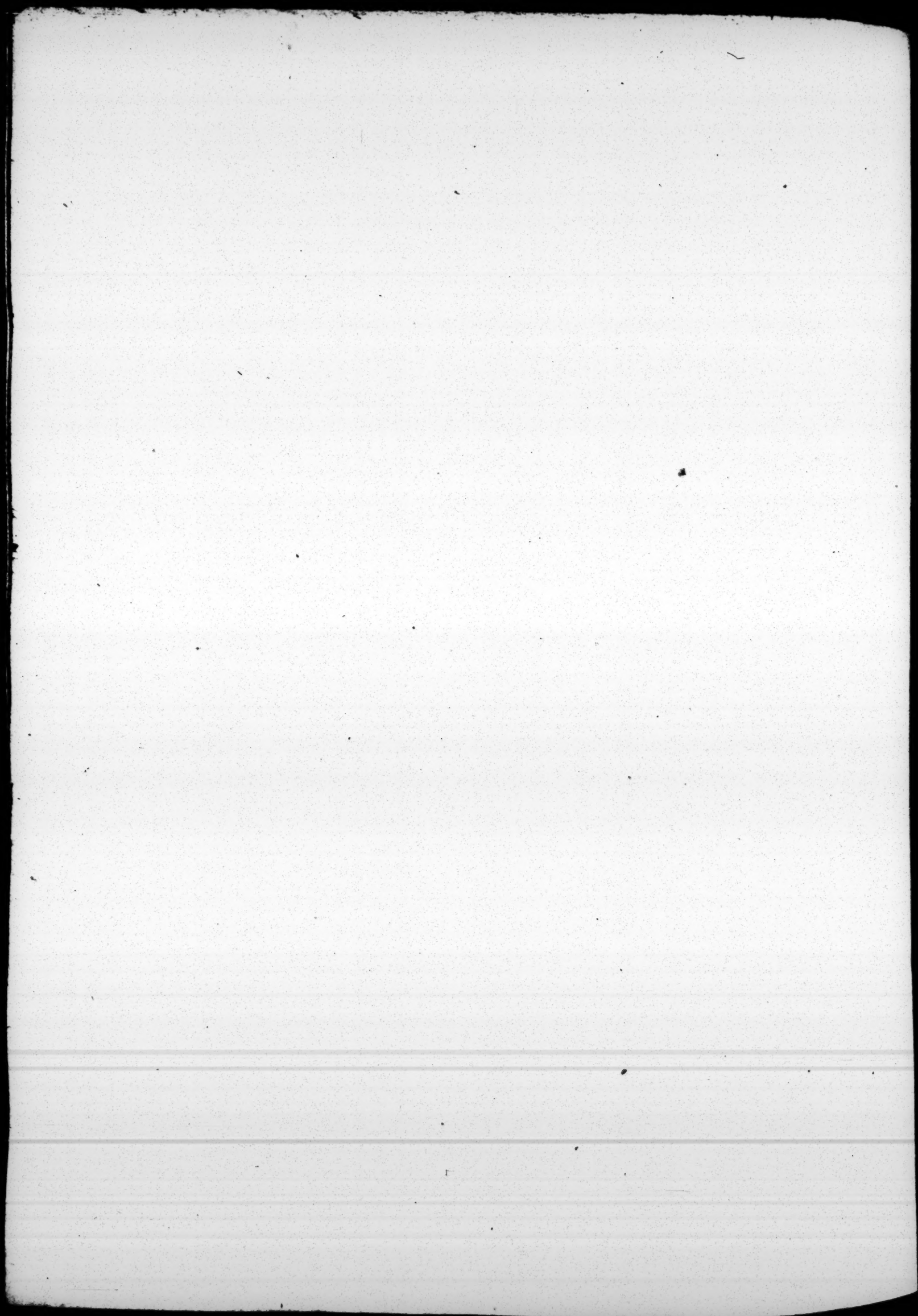
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L O N D O N,

Printed for Samuel Smith at the Prince's Arms in  
St. Paul's Church-yard. 1688.

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*To the sober and understanding Reader, of what  
Perswasion or Communion soever.*

**N**otwithstanding the mighty out-crys of the *Romanists* against all pretensions to Enthusiasm, and that persons left to their private spirit, being destitute of the assistance of an infallible guide, (which is now the prevailing argument to work upon weak and credulous persons, who, impatient of all laborious searching after truth, tamely give up their reason and their understanding to believe whatever shall be imposed upon them in matters of religion, tho never so repugnant and contradictory to the revelations of God in the holy Scripture, and to the judgment of the Catholick Church in the first and purest times of Christianity) run into wild and exorbitant opinions, and lose themselves in a maze of errors, which have an evil influence upon life and manners; yet nothing is more clear and demonstrable, than that the *Roman* Church lies under the guilt of this heavy charge it self, and gives way to the wildest Enthusiasm imaginable in her Votaries, and cherishes it in them; provided it tends any way to the support of their interest, or to the confirmation of their current doctrine and practice. And for this we need only to appeal to the lives of some of their famous Saints, not as they are set out by the idle Monks long before the Reformation, when ignorance and superstition had over-run the world, and when under the shelter of those dark times, in which the light of divine truth was sadly  
B eclipsed,

eclipsed, they invented things absurd and impossible, and which had never any existence, but in their gross phantasies, and corrupted the real history with the mixture of shameful and palpable falshood, to heighten the glory of the Saint, and to make the tale the more plausible: but as they are now published in this great light of knowledge, which the studies of the Scriptures in their original languages, and of polite learning have, since the casting off of the Papal yoke by the undaunted courage and zeal of the first Reformers, restored to the world. It is true, that out of a principle of shame they have retrenched their Breviaries somewhat, and have cast out several idle stories, which gave great scandal not only to us, but to the sober men of their own Communion, and are grown more wary in their Narratives, and run not into those extravagant inventions of Miracles and Apparitions, which would meet with no other entertainment at this time, but contempt and derision: and yet being used to the trade so long, they cannot wholly give it over, it having been and is still so advantagious, where they have to deal with persons of an easie nature, who are prepared to receive whatever comes recommended to them by Authority, tho otherwise of it self never so unlikely and incredible. And especially, when the honour of a Religious Order is concerned in the life of a Saint, all things shall be set out with the greatest pomp of words, and every private phansy shall pass for Illumination, and melancholy shall usurp the name of Inspiration: diseases shall be accounted estasies, and uncouth behaviour, which no sober or civil person would be guilty of, shall be admired as the heighth and perfection of divine love and zeal. All which you will find made out very clearly in the life of this Nunn, which is here presented you.



The design of publishing it is not in the least to expose or ridicule indiscreet devotion, and the mistakes of phanſiful persons, which rather are to be lamented and pitied, but to direct the Reader in the true way of worshipping God in private, of praying with judgment and understanding, and with all due care and sobriety in the highest raptures of zeal; and to give just caution against being transported beyond the bounds of true Christian piety, and good sense, by the delusions of an over-heated imagination, that so we may be wise to sobriety in our devotion, and in our meditations upon holy things, and in all the exercises of the Christian worship. And I doubt not but to make it appear, that there is nothing in the life of this Religious Woman, which is extraordinary, I mean, above the power of distemper and ungoverned phanſy, and which is no way to be ascribed to the Spirit of God, as is here all along very erroneously supposed, to the great prejudice and dishonour of Religion.

And first to begin with her Ecstasies, as that when she was profest, *her heart was livelily penetrated and en-* Sect. 14.  
*lightned with the truth of the Ecstatical words of St. Paul,* as they are called, Gal. 6. 14. (which were certainly uttered by that great Apostle with all possible sobriety and understanding, upon a serious reflexion on the saving benefits of the Cross, in comparison of which all the glories and pleasures, and vanities of the world had nothing of charm and temptation in them) *that forgetting all that was in the world, she seemed to be melted and dissolved, and wholly transformed into her crucified Jesus.* We may justly suppose her wonderfully affected with the musick of the Nunns, and with the other ceremonies of that solemnity, especially considering the extreme great value they set upon their entrance into a Religious Order,

der, that by this they are espoused to Christ, and may pretend to higher degrees of sanctity, than such, as they have left in the world, subject to a thousand dangers (as if they who devoted themselves to a Cloister, were wholly free from the temptation of evil thoughts, and changed their names and natures at the same time) and challenge heaven as due to the merit of their vow. This good temper of mind is very incident to devout persons, when their thoughts are fixt, either upon the transcendent love of God, in sending his Son into the world to redeem us, or upon the dolours and sufferings of Christ upon the Cross; especially, when we consider, that he endured all this for our sake; that our sins were the meritorious cause, for which the Son of God was not only content and well pleased, but, by virtue of the admirable contrivance of God's wisdom in order to the satisfaction of his justice, which was offended, was obliged to be betrayed, arraigned, mocked, scourged, spit upon, and put to an open shame, and hanged upon a tree in the midst of two notorious Criminals, whom the law had justly condemned, as if he who was innocent, as Innocence it self could make him, were the greatest of the three. This is enough to overwhelm our thoughts, and ravish our minds, and fill us with amazement, at the greatness of his love and condescension. So far every devout person, especially of tender affections, may be carryed in the heighth and fervour of their contemplation, and may receive extreme sensible joy in it.

But at this time she was sick, and afflicted with a violent and sharp fever, and given over by her Physicians, and so extremely weak, as to be laid upon a bed at the feet of the altar, and not able to raise her self, and scarce in a condition to be carryed without danger of death, when she had these transports, and emotions; and tho persons



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persons of sound judgments and settled passions, even in the sharpest agonies of sickness, may retain the due use of their reason, when no delirium affects the brain, and comport themselves with the same discretion, as in their full vigour and strength; yet experience shews, that at such times unstable heads, notwithstanding their piety and devotion, are carryed oftentimes away with imagination, and their disturbed phantasy is capable of a thousand impressions, which otherwise in their serious and sober thoughts they would reject. But let the ravishment be never so strong and violent, and the delight never so charming and pleasing, they both receive their measures and degrees from the temper of the person affected. And therefore there is nothing of miracle in it, if after this gratification of her earnest desires of admittance to her profession in her illness, if after the great pleasure and satisfaction she found in the solemn performance of the ceremony, if after her mind was at ease, upon the assurance she had of the merits of dying a profest Nunn; and if after her tumultuous thoughts had been appeased, and her animal spirits allayed, when she was brought to her chamber, and put into her bed, the impressions remained so strong upon her phansy, that she lay senseless, with her eyes fixt upon a Crucifix, and a vermilion colour in her cheeks, which a new fermentation of her blood might justly cause, and indeed might be nothing else but the continuation of her first fit.

This hapning upon a Trinity-Sunday, our Author Sect. 20. thought the very choice of the day to be providential, as if the blessed Trinity designed *to reserve her for a peculiar temple, and on that day took a full and entire possession of her.* But certainly God takes possession of the hearts of the faithful after another manner, by a full conviction upon the understanding of the infinite purity and holiness

ness of his nature, and the other essential perfections of the Godhead, by filling the mind with the love of him, and an ardent desire to do his will in all things, and to glorify his name with the zeal and understanding of a rational creature : and this done in the gentlest methods, and without any violence to our nature.

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This was but the beginning of her spiritual disorder, and the first favour and spiritual entertainment, according to our Author, which Christ her husband gave her, as an earnest of his future love. For these Ecstasies continued the full space of forty days one after another, and this every morning after the holy Communion, and lasted for two whole hours : and I cannot but take notice, that her sickness and melancholy continued still very violent upon her, as well as her Ecstasy, heightened undoubtedly upon her belief of receiving the natural substance of the flesh and blood of Christ in the Sacrament : and by this means she lost all government of her self, and gave up her weak reason wholly to her phantasy, which being violent, heated her spirits and blood, and put them into a rapid circulation, and soon deprived her of her sense and reason too. But as soon as she recovered her health, and a command over her self at the same time, these ravishments and divine communications ceased, which our Author believes to be the instrument of restoring her to health, when they themselves were the effects of her continued indisposition. But afterwards these Ecstasies returned upon her again, and almost every day too, that is, like the renewed accesses of a quotidian ague ; and indeed in a manner her whole life was nothing else but one continued Ecstasy. I shall therefore enquire into the nature, causes and consequences of Ecstasies, with a particular application of each to the subject I have now before me.

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I. By



1. By Ecstasy I understand a suspension of the ordinary acts of reason and understanding, by which the mind is for some time put wholly out of its own power, and cannot exert any of its faculties according to the liberty of its nature: the outward senses, by the help of which, when awakened and undisturbed, it is best able to recollect it self, and make true judgment of things, being deprived of their operations. So that during this alienation and distraction of mind, the Ecstatical person is altered and changed from his natural state and condition.

2. Now of this præternatural state there are three causes assignable, according to the different qualifications of the persons affected. For first it is most undoubtedly certain from the authority of the holy Scripture, that the Ecstasies of the Prophets and Apostles have been effected by the afflation of the holy Spirit of God, such as besel *Ezekiel* and *Daniel* among others, *St. Peter*, and *St. Paul*, and *St. John*. And that others secondly have been possessed by an evil Spirit, of which there are famous instances not only in sacred but in profane History. Such were the *Pythian Women*, the Priestesses of *Apollo*, who were oftentimes cast into deep sleeps, and trances, and convulsions, before they vented their oracles.

3. It is also most certain, that Ecstasies ordinarily proceed from natural causes, and particularly from excess of passion, as of anger, love, sorrow, fear, admiration, and desire of revenge, from intemperance and noxious steams, from intense study and contemplation, from diseases which affect the brain, such, as Lethargies, Epilepsies, and those which the *Greek Physicians* call *καταληψις* and *καταληψις*, the animal spirits being either vitiated and corrupted in the brain, or else being there of a suddain detained and hindered from flowing upon the outward senses, and from distemper of blood, and  
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ill habit of body, of which there are innumerable examples in the writings of Philosophers and Physicians. In which cases the persons affected are oftentimes void of all sense and motion, cold in their extreme parts, and their hands stiff, sometimes their faces pale and wan, at other times the blood settled in their cheeks, with the various symptoms of approaching death. Sometimes one or two, or more of these causes may concur in the same person, as melancholy, and great thoughtfulness, when the mind first retires into it self, and does not take notice of those outward sensible objects, which present themselves, (the spirits being so busily employed in the pursuit of some thought or phansy, as to hinder the external senses to perform their operations,) and so not giving check or restraint to it self, is wholly overwhelmed for a time, and the rational powers extinguished during the seizure: and the thicker and more gross the spirits are, as it happens in grievous fits of melancholy, and consequently not so easily disentangled and dissipated, the abstraction continues the longer, and is the more violent: so that according to the different temperaments and humours of persons, Ecstasies arise from such and such natural causes, assisted by variety of accidents.

3. Let us consider the concomitants, effects and consequences of the ecstasies and raptures, which this woman fell into, which were very various, but such as are usual, and happen to persons carried away with Enthusiastical delusions, and in which the holy Spirit of God cannot with any pretense or ground of reason be supposed to be any way concerned.

1. For her visions, in which she phansied, that she had the honour to be entertained by Christ familiarly, and that very often; that he had loved her, and chosen her to be his Spouse from her mothers womb. And it must



must be supposed as a certain proof and real effect of Christ's love, that her mother, when she was with child of her, felt not the illnesses and indispositions which usually others are subject to in the like condition : and thus her mother's vigorous constitution must pass for miraculous. It is become an usual artifice to take off the minds of such as they would entice into a Cloister from all thoughts of Matrimony, to persuade them, that a vow of Virginity is a spiritual contract of union and love between Christ and them, that the year of probation is a limited time of wooing, and that at the profession the marriage is actually solemnized : and sometimes the delusion is so great, that they have phansied Christ actually present and married to them, and several Saints attending as Paranympths and witnesses of the ceremony. This the Nunns believe waking : it is the solace of their restraint, and the entertainment of their melancholick hours, and the phantasie being thus inveigled and carried away with these dreams of folly in their soberest reflexions on the happy change and condition of life, that they are married to Christ ; in their ecstatical fits, when no outward objects come thwart the imagination, and divert it from being intense, a thousand figures appear to them, and a new scene is drest up in the brain with all seeming representations of truth, and the impressions being so deep and lively, and which cannot be so easily effaced, they become confident and assured when they awake, that they have been conversing with Christ all this while, that he has been caressing them with all the fondnesses and endearments of a Lover, that he has spoken kindly and comfortably unto them, and given them assurances of his constant and unalterable affection toward them. Thus one morning after five years of sad and perplexing thoughts, which made her

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almost

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almost weary of her life, during the singing the *Te Deum*, which certainly raised and exalted her dull and unactive spirits, which such a long and tedious sorrow and anxiety of mind had depressed, upon this suddain change she sinks into one of her usual fits, to which her ill constitution of body and a disordered phantasy so powerfully enclined her, and wakes with all imaginable joy upon the assurance she had received from her divine husband in her profound sleep, that in consideration of her great sufferings and trouble arising from the sight of Devils, who had terrified her during that long interval of his absence, he would never for the future abandon her, but from that moment she should enjoy his dear and never-failing presence. At such a time she phansied Christ to have given her his heart in the presence of St. *Angel*, a Martyr of her Order, and of St. *Catharine* of *Siena*, the witnesses of this extraordinary endearing present, and to place his crown of thorns upon her head, and to have imprinted the five sacred stigmata or wounds upon her body, and this, with the abundant communications of divine knowledge and purity as a reward of her faithful carriage and affection toward him, and that St. *Augustine* at two different times, engraved upon her heart, first in letters of blood, and afterwards in letters of gold, these four words, *verbum caro factum est*, *the word was made flesh*. But as for the wounds, she out of a profound humility, no doubt, not thinking her self worthy of such a stupendious grace and favour, prayed, that they might be concealed from mortal eyes, so that they became invisible, like the miracles which some miserably deluded persons here among us, of the same complexion with hers, have pretended to have wrought, which no body else are admitted to see but themselves; and it is to be supposed,



supposed, that if they had opened her body after her death, they would have found those characters, which she phansied engraven upon her heart, altogether wanting, and equally invisible.

Afterwards for three nights together, she perswaded her self, that she was no less than taken up into heaven, and admitted into the cabinet of the holy Trinity, and saw the glories of the Beatifick Vision: and also at another time had several private conversations with God the Father, who vouchsafed to teach her the method she was to observe in order to her preparation for the Sacrament. To such a height of delusion was she raised by her disturbed phansy and distempered blood, which boiled within her, being so hot at that time, that she put her arms into a bason of water, and poured it upon her breast to cool her self: at other times the gross humors of her body were so agitated, that she foamed at the mouth, and discharged them that way, her stomach swelling with wind and vapors. Sect. 61.  
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Again, she phansied, that some few months after her profession, Christ took upon him the care and conduct of her Soul, and gave her twelve rules of perfection, which the Compiler of her life did not think fit to set down: but two of them, as we may very well conjecture, were these; the one, that before she gave any counsel or command to those over whom she had the government, she being thought fit to be the Mistress of the Novices, when she was but three and twenty years of age, she should look stedfastly upon a Cross: and the other, that she should sleep but five hours. But are not these illusive amusements of a poor Visionaire? Is this part of conduct worthy our Blessed Saviour? has he not laid down plain and easie rules and directions of consummate piety and devotion in his holy Gospel? He has

done this most certainly, and there is no need of any further addition from Ecstasical dreams.

But have not several wild Enthusiasts, equally distempered in their brain, pretended to the same intimate and familiar conversation with God and Christ, when the whole has been transacted in their disturbed imagination, pleasing it self with gross images and ideas of things?

At other times upon alteration of the humors, the phantasy, quite tyred with the contemplation of heavenly things, gives way to melancholick impressions, and then a new scene opens, even that of hell, and devils appear, and such like frightful spectacles, and the thoughts of the deluded person are so intent upon these dismal representations both sleeping and waking, that no reason, no advice, no perswasion, not sleep, (for at that time the delusion is the strongest) scarce any medicine can either divert or allay the violence of them; and then whatever melancholy can possibly suggest, is believed real, and receives new strength every day more and more by continued thoughtfulness and indulgence in it; which was the very case of this poor deluded woman. Her day-visions, and night-dreams were equally terrible: she seemed abandoned to the fury, spight, and madness of infernal spirits, and a voice had told her, she should be cast into a place full of Devils, which she called the lake of lions, which appeared under monstrous shapes, and remain'd there for the space of five years; and upon this mispersuasion, direful agonies must necessarily follow, and sorrowful exclamations, and bemoaning of her forlorn condition, incapable of receiving any comfort. Devils haunt and persecute her every where, and five set upon her very furiously and cruelly one after another, and then she phantasies,

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phanfies, that she was bit by them under the figure of vipers and serpents, and was ready to be devoured by fierce Lions, enraged with hunger : but what were these Devils ? it appears, that they were no other than vain and extravagant thoughts, which broke into her mind, the effect of an ill habit of body and a distempered brain.

In this woful perplexed condition, she taking up a knife in the kitchen, is tempted to kill her self, but to prevent her desperate wickedness, reflecting upon the Virgin *Mary*, whom she called upon for help, she runs away with it, and puts it into the hands of her image : afterwards her restless condition prompts her to forsake the Cloister, finding no ease in her troubled mind, under a pretense of piety and zeal to gain souls : she seizes upon the keys of the convent, and runs to the Virgins image, as if it were impossible, for her self, or any other, to take them away out of her hands, being fully secured this way from being a fugitive. How inconsistent is this wild behaviour with sobriety of temper and understanding ? Is it not rather the effect of phrensy and distraction ?

At other times, according to the different working of the humor, Enthusiastical persons phansy Saints and Angels, and the blessed Virgin especially, to appear in their defense and succour, and leave marks of their favour behind them ; as a rose, or a chaplett, or a veil, such a one whiter than snow the holy Virgin is said to give our Nunn, which preserved her virgin-purity from the furious attacks of lustful thoughts, with which one of the Devils assaulted her. But if these presents be real, and not conveyed by any trick, artifice, or confederacy, is it not to be feared, that by the just judgment of God such persons who will not be governed in a way of reason, and according to the directions of his holy word, are deluded by

by the Devil, who can and does transform himself into an Angel of light, and has assumed, even by the confessions of some of the great writers of the *Roman Church*, the shape and figure of Christ crucified, and of the Saints? and to his agency by the permission of God, several odd accidents and alterations, which seem præternatural, may not unjustly be ascribed, they having in them no tendency to promote the glory of God, or the good of Mankind, or to advance the true Religion, or promote piety, but altogether the contrary, and particularly to keep up evil and unworthy opinions of God, to cast a blemish upon his wisdom in the prescribed means and methods of grace and salvation, and to foment superstition and gainful error. But of this I shall have occasion to speak in the Appendix.

In this ecstatical condition it is, that the phantasy ranges all over the universe, and takes a survey of heaven and hell, and purgatory, with which supposed place their waking thoughts cannot but be most sadly affected, and seems to have a clear view of souls in their state of separation. The pretense is so common in all enthusiasts, and so subject to illusion, that one would wonder, that the discoveries of these Visionnaires should find any credit in the world, and ~~it~~ much more be admitted as good evidence in order to a legal process about the beatification of any person, who died with the fame and reputation of holiness, but that such stories mightily facilitate that weighty affair, when an extraordinary devout Nunn swears, she saw his soul all glorious and splendid in heaven: and who cannot but believe purgatory and the redemption of souls out of it by the suffrages, alms, and masses of the living, from her pretended visions of her Brothers soul, who acquainted her what particular torments are inflicted



inflicted there, and for what particular sins, and of that of a Nunn, which had been detained in that sad place for three very trivial reasons which the reader will find in the 8<sup>th</sup> section? Indeed these stories will much edify a reader according to our Author; but it must be such a one, as is idly credulous, and wants the use of his reason, and is sunk into the very dregs of *Roman* Superstition.

2. Another usual effect and concomitant of ecstasies, is an unequal temper of mind, which shews its self in excess and variety of passion. Sometimes the person is ravished with joy, and carried away with pleasing remembrances of the supposed divine communications. The Ideas continue bright in their phanasy, and their blood is put into a new ferment, and their heart is dilated, and the spirits are exalted and become more vigorous in their motion, and the mind consequently will exult and triumph in a warm reflexion on its glorious condition, to be admitted to an inward converse with God, and rapturous expressions than are usually poured forth with great fervency and zeal, and with all the confidence of truly inspired persons: when indeed it may be nothing else but the reeks of heated melancholy in the brain of a devout man or woman, which by a natural operation causes quickness of thoughts, and fluency of scriptural expressions, and strains of eloquence, and exclamations of triumph. But soon after they fall into the other extreme; for when the melancholy is cool, and the spirits are quite tired, they grow dull and stupid, the mind is affected with the contrary passion, despair and despondency take place, and sad abidings and dismal apprehensions of things overwhelm them: and nothing but frightful objects present themselves to the phanasy, which dwelling too long upon them, is wholly taken up with the thoughts of them. These sad thoughts  
break

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forth into lamentable and dismal out-cries and expressions full of despair, and afford plentiful matter for tears, and sighs, and groans, and all the disorders of immoderate grief, the natural and usual entertainment of a troubled mind. This certainly will satisfy the sober reader about the reason of those sudden transports of joy he will meet with up and down in the life of our Nunn, and of those deliquiums and desolations of spirit, and sharp agonies, under which she lay more frequently: her phansy was disturbed, and her constitution weak and sickly: sometimes a fever holding her for five years together, and all the symptoms of melancholy, followed by the usual effects seen upon her.

3. As to her profound discourses of the other world, and of spiritual things, and of the mysteries of faith: there is nothing in it of supernatural and extraordinary: this hapning also according to the temper of the person affected: for the phansy being raised by intense meditation, and finding vent at the mouth by words poured forth impetuously, and great pleasure too in these wild harangues, is carried beyond it self in its ordinary workings, and flies out into rhapsody, and extravagant and swelling forms of speech, which oftentimes are without due connexion and just sense, and indeed are altogether unintelligible, or else very mean and trivial, if examined and brought to the test either of right reason, or the divine revelation of the Scriptures.

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4. So for her speaking of Latine, and citing the Fathers, it is to be remembred in the first place, that the Nunns themselves perform their solemn devotions in the Quire in Latine, and that no other language is permitted by the *Roman* Church to be used in any of their publick offices. And it is well known, that the Jesuits in  
*China*



*China* are obliged at this day to conform to this established rule and custom, and baptize in Latine, and most strictly retain the *Latine* forms, as *Ave Maria* and the rest: as they did in *Æthiopia*; which created (a) a great dislike and prejudice in the Christians of that country against the *Roman* religion, and contributed not a little to their expulsion. So that we may conclude, that the Nunns by their often singing the Psalter and the Hymns contained in their rituals, from which they are not to vary one syllable, may understand somewhat imperfectly the sense of several pious expressions and ejaculations, which they easily get by heart, and fix in their memory, and so may well be supposed to utter them when they are sober, as well as when they are ecstatical, without any the least pretence to divine and supernatural inspiration. And the like may be said for her citing several passages out of the Fathers in their proper language. I suppose in Latine too, such in all probability as she had heard made use of by the Monks and Fryers in their Sermons, or had found scattered up and down in their Breviaries and lives of Saints or books of their own language, which they put into their hands to cherish their devotion and divert them at their hours of leisure. But secondly this has happened to a great many persons in their distractions, and especially to women in the height of fits, arising from diseases proper to their sex, that they have spoken sometimes Latine, sometime Greek, and Hebrew, of which before they had no knowledge and skill: of which (b) *Levinus Lemnius*, a most judicious Physician and Philosopher gives several instances, which supposing to be true, and not done by artifice and confederacy, and their speaking of unknown languages, which they had never so much as heard of, being unaccountable upon natural principles, yet it would be the height of rash-

(a) *V. Ludolfi  
histor. Æthi-  
opic. lib. 2.  
cap. 12.*

(b) *De occult.  
Nat. mir.  
lib. 2. c. 2.*

ness to ascribe this without any further examination to the influences of the same blessed and holy Spirit, who inspired the Apostles with the knowledge of strange tongues, which was altogether necessary for their more speedy and effectual planting Christianity in the most distant places of the then known world: which miraculous gift continued with them, and was conducted and regulated by their understanding, and did not consist in wild incoherent stuff, or meer flashes of an extravagant phanſy, or in unintelligible and nonsensical notions, but in steady and convincing Arguments agreeable to the true measures of sober and rational discoursing: whereas, it has been found by undeniable effects, and other satisfactory proofs, that many such persons at such times have been possessed and acted by an evil spirit, who has spoke through their organs. And this the several histories of persons exorcised according to the rules of *Roman* art, which no *Romanist* can well deny, will sufficiently make out. But we need not go so far in the present instance, which has nothing in it above the usual methods and power of distempered nature.

5. To heighten her glory, and to render her a genuine daughter of the great *Elias*, she is said to be endued with the spirit of prophecy, which most ecstatick persons pretend to: but the instance is so mean and trifling, that nothing but a most injudicious partiality to her could possibly suggest the thought, or persuade the belief of it. For shall every confident asseveration pass for the dictates of an infallible spirit? A sickly young melancholick maid, who had almost killed her self by immoderate fasting, and other undue severities, finds her self more and more indisposed, and probably enough concludes from natural symptoms, that her increasing distemper, by the progress it had made already, might bring



bring her into great danger of death, and consequently she knew, that if this should happen, as she foresaw it might, they would hasten her Profession, that she might not be deprived of the merit of it. And for this conjectural phanfy, she is entitled to a prophetick spirit: such also was her guess, which is called a prediction, that the Cardinal of *Florence* should one day be made Pope, which our Author, considering the rare qualities of that Gentleman, to which we may add the great interest of the *Medicean* family in the Court of *Rome* at that time, confesses was not difficult to divine, and it is likely it is what ten thousand others wisht or said besides our Nunn; but he lays the stress upon this, that she acquainted him, that he should enjoy the glory of the soveraign Pontificate but a little while: tho that moment be undetermined, and it would have served, if he had lived a year, or two, or three, or longer; only let it be remembred, that when that Cardinal was chosen, he was about seventy years of age, and not of the strongest constitution; and they who chose him in that Conclave, to put an end to a troublesom election, and to bring their purposes about more successfully in the next, might do it the rather, because they easily foresaw without pretending to be Prophets, that he would be but a short-liv'd Pope. Another instance of her prophetick spirit is, that after she had received the extreme unction, when her Confessor, who was desirous to visit the Hermites of *Mount-Serrat*, at some distance from *Florence*, where is a chappel and image of the *V. Mary*, famous for miracles, and mightily frequented by her superstitious votaries, and recommend her to their prayers, as if this had been the only end of that assigned journey, was unwilling, for fear lest she should die before his return, she encouraged him to go, assuring him, that he

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should find her alive three days after. But in consumptions, and such like chronical diseases, which bring on death by very slow degrees, it is no way difficult to believe, that the sick persons who are more sensible of their condition than either the Physicians or assisting friends, may from natural experience conclude, that they shall hold out longer, two or three days or more, than the others could easily imagine.

6. The last effect and consequence of Ecstasy, which I shall mention, is wild and odd behaviour, which no sober persons, who enjoy the full and perfect use of their reason and understanding, would give way to so much as once, much less would be guilty of often, and is indeed the effect of a distempered phansy, and of downright phrensy, which too too evidently appears in the life of this Nunn. Let her be as reserved as a Nunn should be, and avoid not only the conversation and sight of all men, even of her father and kinsmen, but of the women of the world, as they call all such, as will not enter into a Convent, (including her mother and other relations in the number) and come not within the Parlour, where the Nunns often divert themselves, and spend their leisure-time in chat, and receive the visits of their devotos and friends, and have it in the same horror as hell it self; (but a very few Nunns, I suppose, are of her opinion) and extravagantly wish, that she might burn in Purgatory so long time as she had lost in that place, in way certainly of expiation for her unprofitable discourse there, and for the loss of those pretious minutes, which she might have employed in the stricter observance of her rule; let her retain a firm perswasion of the perfection of monastick life, and have as mean an opinion, as she pleases, of others, left in the world, and either pity their condition, as  
not

Sect. 15.



not so happy as hers, or despise them, as not so religious as they might be, because not professed : yet her continual kissing of the grates and walls, which kept her from having any thing to do in the world, favours of weakness and childishness, and is a kind of spiritual wantonness. But this is very inconsiderable and pardonable to what follows, as her leaving the work she was employed about, and running to the Chappel in great hast in one of her melancholick fits; which yet must be thought *the hand of God upon her*, as it was upon the old Prophets, and there falling down in a swoone half dead, and, after she had a little recovered her self, crying out, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* this hapned in the 19th year of her age; at other times running in the Cloisters, gardens, and other places of the Convent, then pulling off her shoes and stockings, and throwing them upon the ground, and running in great fury to her cell to pack up what she had there, in order to be rid of such unnecessary furniture, and putting on one old habit only upon her bare flesh, without any other cloths but a scapulaire and a girdle, she marches in triumph to the Chappel, singing in the way *Te Deum*, and there makes an extravagant profession before an image of the Virgin, writing with one hand, and laying the other upon that of the image, thus plighting her faith by this ceremony.

This was immediately after an Ecstasy, when it is pretended she had been cast down upon the ground by the Spirit of God. But the Confessor and Abbess commanding her to resume her habit, and go like the other Nunns, she was forced to obey; but the next morning after she had received the Sacrament, she returns to the same extravagance, and addresses to our blessed Saviour in a fit, which then seized her, insinuating, that in doing what she had done, she had obeyed his commands,

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Phil. 3. 8,  
10.

mands, phanſying all along, that ſhe was accompliſhing the deſigns of God, and that it was he, who had impoſed this rigorous penance upon her, as you will more fully ſee to be her pretence in other inſtances. But this extravagance appeared moſt, when upon a reflexion on the hiſtory of our Saviour's paſſion, ſhe was carried by an ungoverned imagination to act it over in her own perſon in all the particular circumſtances of it, as if this fooliſh representation had been the ſame as to be crucified with him, which continued full ſix and twenty hours; and indeed 'tis well remarked, that all this while ſhe was in an ecſtaſy, that is, ſhe did not well know what ſhe did, but was hurried on by the violent impreſſions of a groſs phanſy, to this indiſcreet and unwarrantable imitation of our Saviour's agonies in the garden, the whole proceſs of his arraignment, his crown of thorns, bearing the croſs, and the manner of his dying upon it, uſing beſides the ſeven words of our Lord, very enthuſiaſtical expreſſions, which cannot be juſtified, and indeed ſcarce excuſed. And to compleat this mock-ſhew, when ſhe had recovered her ſelf from the tranſports of ecſtaſy, our Author ſays, ſhe appeared fair as an Angel of heaven, and ſeemed to participate of the reſurrection of our Saviour, as ſhe had before of his paſſion. This certainly is far from the meaning of St. Paul, when he ſaid, *he counted all things but as loſs and dung, that he might win Chriſt, and know him, and the power of his reſurrection, and the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, being made conformable to his death*: this conformity not conſiſting in mimical proceſſions, or artificial ſcenes of phanſy, but in mortifying our corrupt paſſions, in ſubmitting to his will, and in ſuffering with meekneſs and patience when God calls us to it, for his name and truth after his bleſſed example. Thus I have ſhown the natural



tural and common effects of Ecstasy, which not is alike violent in all, or at all times in the same person, according to the various indispositions, wherewith he or she is affected, that it depends chiefly upon the distemperature of the humors, and of the animal spirits, which often produces distraction of thought, and melancholy, and sadness, and is caused by an ill habit of body, by fevers and epilepsies; and such like diseases, which affect the brain, and that where phantasy is predominant, and the head weak, and the passions violent, these illusions oftentimes prevail; by which it will appear, that as long as these cause continue, or as often as they recur, the effects are natural and unavoidable, viz. relapses into ecstatical fits, and all the misbehaviour consequent upon them.

3. The next thing remarkable in the life of this poor melancholick Nunn, is her great austerity, which she began early; the first instance or prognostick of which Sec. 2. our Author makes to be her earnest rejecting of fine clothes, when she was a very child; and in favour of the coarse habit of Monks and Nuns, he misapplies the word of our B. Saviour, *Matth.* 11. 8. and of *St. Austin*, as if the different condition and professions of life, and the common rules of civil prudence and behaviour did not suppose a distinction in habit, according to every ones quality; and as if no mediums are to be observed between gaudiness and nastiness of apparel; we quarrel not with the *Capuchius* for their beggarly and homely cloths, so long as they make them only the badge of their order and profession, and not of religion, which consists not in such trivial matters, but leaves us to the rules of decency and expedience. But if slovenliness be necessary and essential to a strict and austere life, some of the late orders of Religious in the Church of *Rome* will hardly be able to free themselves from just censure for the peculiar

peculiar neatness of their habit. Whatsoever aversion she had to the silks, with which they would have clothed her, it might be nothing else but the effect of her childish phanſy, without any regard to her being afterward a Nunn; but it is common to moſt writers to apply the ſlighteſt and moſt accidental paſſages of infancy and childhood, tho they belong promiſcuouſly to ſeveral, as certain marks and proofs of the future behaviour and quality of the perſon, whom they have a mind to admire and magnifie; and nothing, tho meerly caſual, or never ſo mean and uſual, but with the addition of a few circumſtances ſhall be made uſe of to fill up the character, and ſhall paſs for ſomething deſigned and extraordinary.

Sect. 6.

It is certain, that we ought to reflect upon the dolours and all the other amazing circumſtances of our bleſſed Saviour's ſufferings with a lively, ſenſible, and pungent ſorrow, that he, who was innocence it ſelf, ſhould be treated after ſo rude and barbarous a manner: and it will add great weight to our ſorrow, when we conſider, that it was for our ſakes that he endured all this: and this will ſoon make a way for the other paſſions to enter, with which a devout mind ought to be juſtly affected: but for a girl of twelve years of age, to wear a Crown of thorns upon her head all night in that extremity of pain, which their ſharp points neceſſarily cauſed, was the effect of a wild phanſy, deſtitute of the direction and government of ſober reaſon, which allows of no ſuch unjuſtifiable ſeverity, and is far from the genuine temper of Chriſt's religion, which commands us indeed to deny our ſelves, and to take up his croſs and follow him, that is, croſs our very inclinations and appetites, part with all our worldly enjoyments, if they ſtand in competition with our duty, and ſuffer willingly



willingly and cheerfully for his sake, and the profession of his truth, but without any such indiscreet and childish imitation of his sufferings. To this danger are devout persons, over-run with melancholy, exposed, who do not consider as they ought the true end, and design, and benefits of Christ's sufferings, and the proper influences they ought to have on our understandings and lives, but pleasing themselves with superficial notions, and bare history, and gross ideas of things, at last give themselves up to the excesses of feminine pity. But this mispersuasion, that her complexion and temper enclined her to, grew up with her, and was heightened into a pretence, that God inspired her with this severe course of life, which she had taken up so early, and imposed this severe penance upon her; and that it was the will of Christ, who by these methods was about to make her conformable to himself, that she should use these extraordinary rigors upon her self. In one of her ecstasies, after she had desired to know of God, what he would have her do, it was answered her at the ear of her heart, that is, she had a strong phanasy in her disturbed brain, that it was his will that she should live only upon bread and water for five years, except on festival days, when she might a little indulge her self with Lenten fare. But it seems she was afraid to discover to those who had the government of her this severe divine command, till upon the hearing of another voice, that ordered her on the following day to tast of nothing but bread and water, and that under the threat of *withdrawing his eyes from her*, she disclosed the revelation; but they commanded her the contrary: but her weak stomach rejecting the ordinary food served upon the table for four days together, they very wisely conclude, that this was a certain proof and sign of the divine will and pleasure, and leave her in her own power

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Sect. 32.

to do whatever she pleased, as to her eating or not eating. Hence followed extraordinary penances, as fasting several weeks without any other nourishment, but that of the Sacrament, (so that for that time she only fed upon, and was sustained by species or meer accidents) whipping her self with iron chains, and putting on an iron pointed girdle, which she kept on even at her work, and rousing her self upon bundles of thorns; but this was in imitation of St. *Francis*, when by violence of temptation lustful thoughts broke in upon her mind, which is here called, being *persecuted by the Devil Asmodeus*.

Sect. 32.

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But it seems, time and a serious recollection of her own sickly and weak condition, joyned to the advice of her Superiors and Physicians, made her relax very much of this severity, in order to the recovery of her health, which she had so much impaired. Now what is there in all this severity but melancholy and obstinacy of humor arising from misguided devotion, and a misunderstanding of the true spirit of Christianity, and a false persuasion of the will and mind of God, owing wholly to the violent suggestions of her deluded phanasy?

4. The miracles they ascribe to her are mean and trifling, and I suppose are only put down, because her life would seem imperfect without them, and that this is become a necessary qualification in a person, to whom her zealous Votaries design the glory of a canonization. But they little remember the true end and design of miracles, which is to convince, and which, like the gift of tongues, are *signs to them which believe not, not to them which believe*, and are made use of by God for some great purpose of his Providence, and not to amuse and raise wonder only: and it often happens that tricks and artifices, and sometimes meer accidents pass with ignorant and credulous persons, who understand nothing either



either of the power of phanſy, or the power of nature, for miracles. What they relate of her uſing her needle and pencil in an ecſtaſy, that others have done in their ſleep, which tho it be lookt upon as unuſual, is far from being miraculous. And for the pretended miracle of the multiplication of the oyl, and this by placing her image upon the veſſel, it looks like a fiction, as if ſuch a kind of proviſion were ſo abſolutely neceſſary at that time, that the Nunns could not live without it, or that they could procure none from abroad, and wanted friends or mony to encreaſe their ſtore, or that the old ſtock made the year before, and of which, there being no dearth in that or the preceding years, there might be a great plenty left in *Florence*, which could have eaſily furniſhed them, had been quite ſpent: and it is finely invented to render her more conformable to the two great Prophets, whom they idly phanſy the founders of the *Carmelite* order, but it was great poverty in one of the widows, whoſe ſon was ready to be ſeized upon by her mercileſs creditor, and a famine, which raged in *Judea*, which made their compaſſion and the miraculous effect of it neceſſary. Sect. 77.

Thus alſo if God does bleſs with ſucceſs the uſe of any medicine, or if the ſtrength of nature throws off the virulence of any diſtemper, if the Saint be at the ſame time invoked, or any relique be applied to the part affected, or if by a happy providence there is any great deliverance from imminent danger either at land or ſea, this muſt be aſcribed to the merit and interceſſion of the Saint prayed to, and the glory of it given away from God, to whoſe great mercy and goodneſs we owe our being, and the continuance of our lives, and our daily preſervation. Sect. 87.

Her body, when dead, ſends forth ſweet odours, and remains uncorrupted, that is, the humors being ſpent

and wholly dried up by her immoderate fasting; and her virginal modesty continued in it, after her soul had left it, so that she, not being able to endure the sight and touch of a licentious extravagant young man, who came among others to the Church, where she lay exposed, to look upon her, she turned her head on the other side, as it were in just scorn and indignation, no doubt, to the great terror of the young man, and the amazement of those who were with him. This prodigy was attested by a venerable Jesuit, who could do no less out of gratitude to her memory, whose vision and oath upon it contributed so much to the fainting of *Lewis Gonzaga* of the same order. But how often are such supposed prodigies owing to meer phansy and mistake, or else to trick and artifice? Thus in those sad and gloomy times of the year 1658. the statue of *William* the Conqueror in the Royal Exchange was said to have brandished his sword, and upon either the delusion or design of the first reporter, I observed, as I accidentally past through that place, great numbers of idle phansiful people staring upon it, vainly expecting, that the trick would be shewn a second time, that was not shewn the first: it being equally true, as that the statue of King *Charles* the first on horse-back at *Charing-Cross* shook his head, as a noble Lord, who had given great disturbance to his government by his factious and rebellious behaviour, which he repented of, was carryed by in great pomp and state in his hearse to be enterred in the Country, which the idle reporter swore that he saw done.

I need not enlarge upon the other particulars of her life; her charity to the poor, which begg'd at her Fathers gate, when she was a very child, in giving them a share of her breakfast and evening collation; her retiring from the company of those of her age into secret places,  
that



that she might with greater application of mind give up her self to mental and vocal prayer; her instructing little children; her vow and resolution of becoming a Nunn, when she was but ten years old: besides the above mentioned austerities, her contempt of the world, and her ready obedience; all which, if there be nothing of hyperbole and amplification, as is usual in such kind of narratives, may be ascribed to a strict education, which working upon a religious melancholick temper, had produced such an unusual behaviour, which the Nunns, to whose care she was committed, encouraged and rendered habitual, and then judged, from these hopeful beginnings, that she would equal the chiefest women-Sect. 8. saints of their Church, as being sent by God to supply the great loss the order had sustained by the death of St. *Therese*, which hapned but two months before she took the habit upon her, in her sixteenth year, which she had vowed four years before. But tho this age in other Countries is not capable of that experience, and solid judgment, which are requisite to make them to consider all things wisely and fully as to their future condition of life: yet this must be no prejudice and bar to the ripe wits of *Italy*, who can judge for themselves in their very childhood. But it is said, that the Spirit of Christ had taken full possession of her long before, and so consequently her devoting her self to a cloistered life, must be ascribed to inspiration and holy love, and not to any melancholick humor, or the direction of a Nurse or Governant, and those other plausible arguments, with which other young maidens are wont to be inveigled into a Nunnery. Sect. 3.

But let us grant, that true devotion carryed her thither; yet what great pity is it, that it was not better regulated? but this neither the superstitious doctrines and

and practices of the *Roman Church*, in which she had been educated, nor her enthusiastick temper would permit even in the sober and less disturbed intervals of her life.

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Sect. 40.

Sect. 47.

Sect. 55.

(o) 63. 67.

(a) See la relation de ceremonies faites en l'eglise de saint Pierre de Rome, avec les preparatifs, en la canonization.—  
printed at the end of her life.

Let any sober person reflect upon her usual practices and behaviour, such as running to the image of the Virgin, and praying before it, and having recourse to her for aid and protection, by which she is said to be *victorious over the Devils, who tempted her*, her rendring the homage of vows to her, to her Angel Keeper, and to all Saints, and that vow especially, to worship their reliques; (and we know to what a great height of foolish superstition that veneration is arrived among them, and how they abuse the credulity of ignorant people,) her protestations, which are many of them indiscreet and unjustifiable, (for as to her daily spiritual exercise, our Author has not thought fit to set it down, tho he says, it was most exact and complete) her frequent disciplining her self in the way of revenge for her drowsiness, before she attained the great gift of sleeping but little, or for missing of prayers but once, tho she was then attending at that time on one of the Sisters in the Parlour, whom she could not well leave alone; and lastly, her extravagant desires and exclamations and prayers (o) void of sound sense and piety, and flowing from downright Enthusiasm; and let him take a full view of the whole course of her life, he cannot but lament the misfortune of this poor woman to fall into such ill hands, who understood her distemper no better, which should have been corrected by medicine and sober counsel, and miscarryed so foully in their conduct, and were so miserably mistaken in their judgment of her.

This is the person, for whose canonization the (a) *Carmelitan* order was so concerned for many years, which could



could not be effected without the request and intercession of the Emperor and King of *Spain*, and of the King and Queen of *France*, it being a matter of great delay and expense too, to pass through all the forms used in the Court of *Rome*, before they can hope to give a definitive sentence to be past in favour of the Candidate, from the p. 12.  
mouth of the Oracle of truth, as they speak; for the Pope after such long debates and examinations of witnesses by a deputed Congregation of *Cardinals*, to whom this weighty office is recommended, cannot but be infallible. This ceremony is attended with so much pomp and magnificence, as that it may well be reckoned among the triumphs of the *Roman Church*; and it helps to keep up the grandeur of that See, and conduces to the enriching and flourishing of *Rome*, where upon this and the like occasions, so many thousands flock to see, as our Author speaks, *heaven upon earth, and the idea of the habitation of* p. 37.  
*the Saints in paradise*. But what is the design of all these costly and rich preparations? is it only, that the person beatified may be solemnly declared to have dyed with the reputation of great sanctity, and from that time should be lookt upon and acknowledged as a Saint? but what need then of the Popes sentence, and all this mighty stir? the holy Martyrs and Confessors, and other truly devout men and women in the antient times who had signalized themselves by their sufferings, and by their zeal for the Christian religion, and by the exactest measures of their duty, and the exercises of charity and holiness, had their names registred in the Dypticks and Martyrologies of the several Churches, to which they belonged, and gained the reputation of saintship from the concurrent suffrage of all the Christians of their time, who were just to their fame, and celebrated their memories with solemn thanksgiving to God, by whose holy  
inspiration.

inspiration and grace they were enabled to do him service, and glorifie him both in their lives and deaths; and it is certain, that this recital and commemoration of their names was only designed to do honour to their persons, and to keep up in the minds of people a continual remembrance of their heroick piety. And if the superstition of after ages had proceeded no further, but had recommended to the whole world great and extraordinary examples of true solid Christian piety, only for their imitation, it had been well for Christendom, and no small service might have been done to religion by it. But there is now a far different aim in this solemnity, in which not only the advantage and honour of every religious order are concerned, (for each strives to get many Saints declared, who have followed and embraced their rule, than which nothing can give it a greater lustre, and this will bring them more admirers and customers) but the honour of the *Roman Church* too: for all this ado is made, that these new Saints may be worshipped by the faithful, and invoked in their distresses and necessities, and by this means one of her corrupt doctrines about praying to Saints is confirmed and rendred more and more sacred, which is altogether precarious, and has no foundation in Scripture, and was unknown in the first ages of the Church, and is derogatory to the honour of our B. Saviour, who is our only mediator and advocate. Thus at last it is said, that the Pope *Clement the 9th.* *being divinely inspired with the lights of the holy Spirit*, was determined to accord to the Blessed *Peter of Alcantara*, and *Mary Magdalen of Pazzi*, the merit and glorious title of Saints, and accordingly he pronounced them such, and a Bull was issued out, wherein he gives a plenary indulgence to all who shall be present at their canonization, and shall at the hour of death implore

pag. 9.

pag. 11.  
April 28.  
1669.

pag. 40.

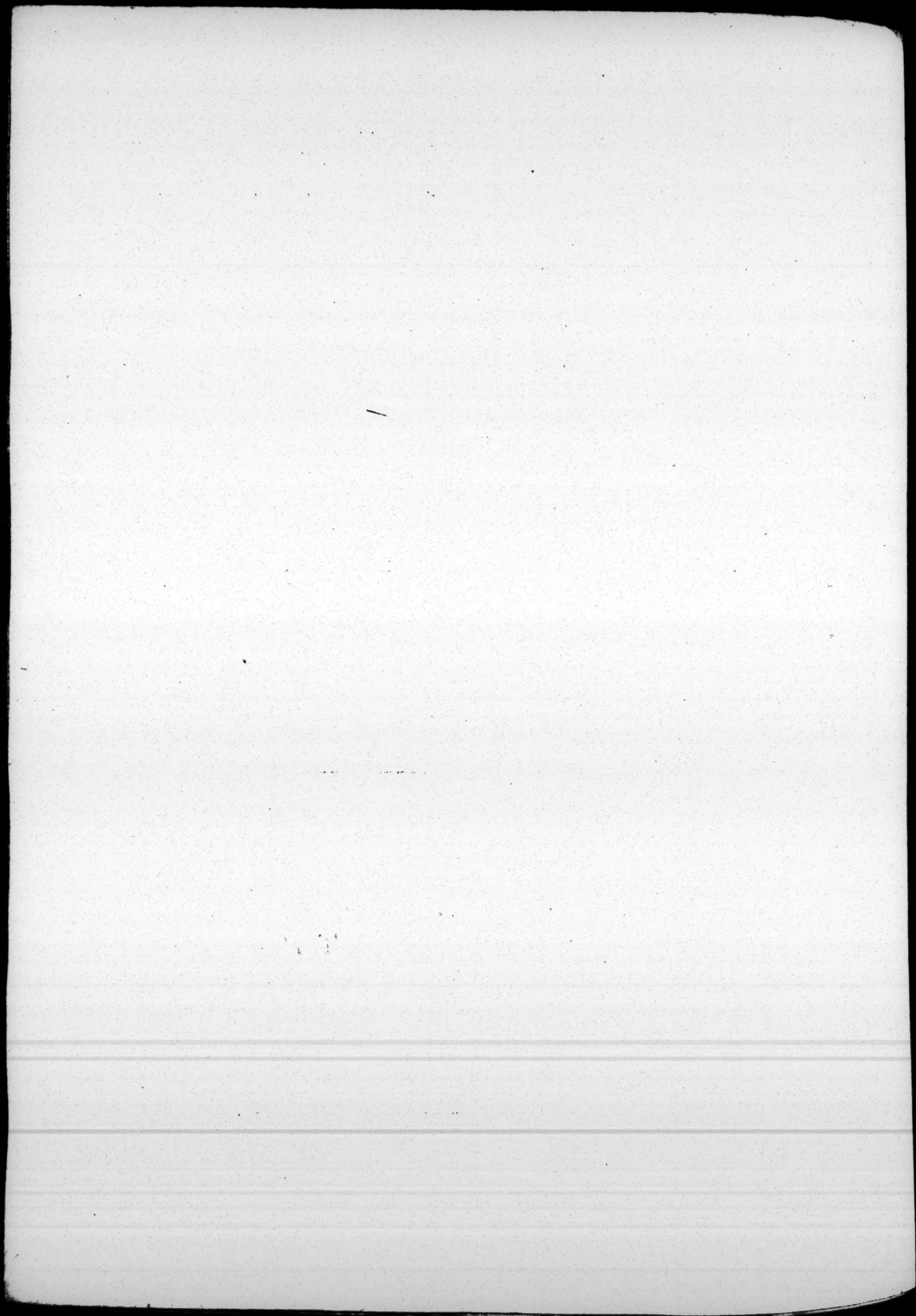


plore their intercession, besides a great number of other indulgences granted to the Chaplets, Rosaries, Images, Crosses, and Medals I left upon that occasion, which I do not think fit to trouble the Reader with. What I have already set down, being enough to shew him, what the ends and designs of their pretended canonizations are, and who they are who have been lately fainted at *Rome*. God in his good time root out of the world all superstition and vanity in worship, and error in doctrine, and restore true Catholick unity to his divided Church upon the principles of Catholick and Apostolick Christianity, which the Church of *England* does profess and maintain, and inspire all the members and votaries of it with the spirit of sober piety and devotion, such as is most agreeable to the Christian religion and worship. *Amen.*

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O F  
S<sup>t</sup>. Mary Magdalene  
O F  
P A Z Z I,  
A Carmelite Nunn.

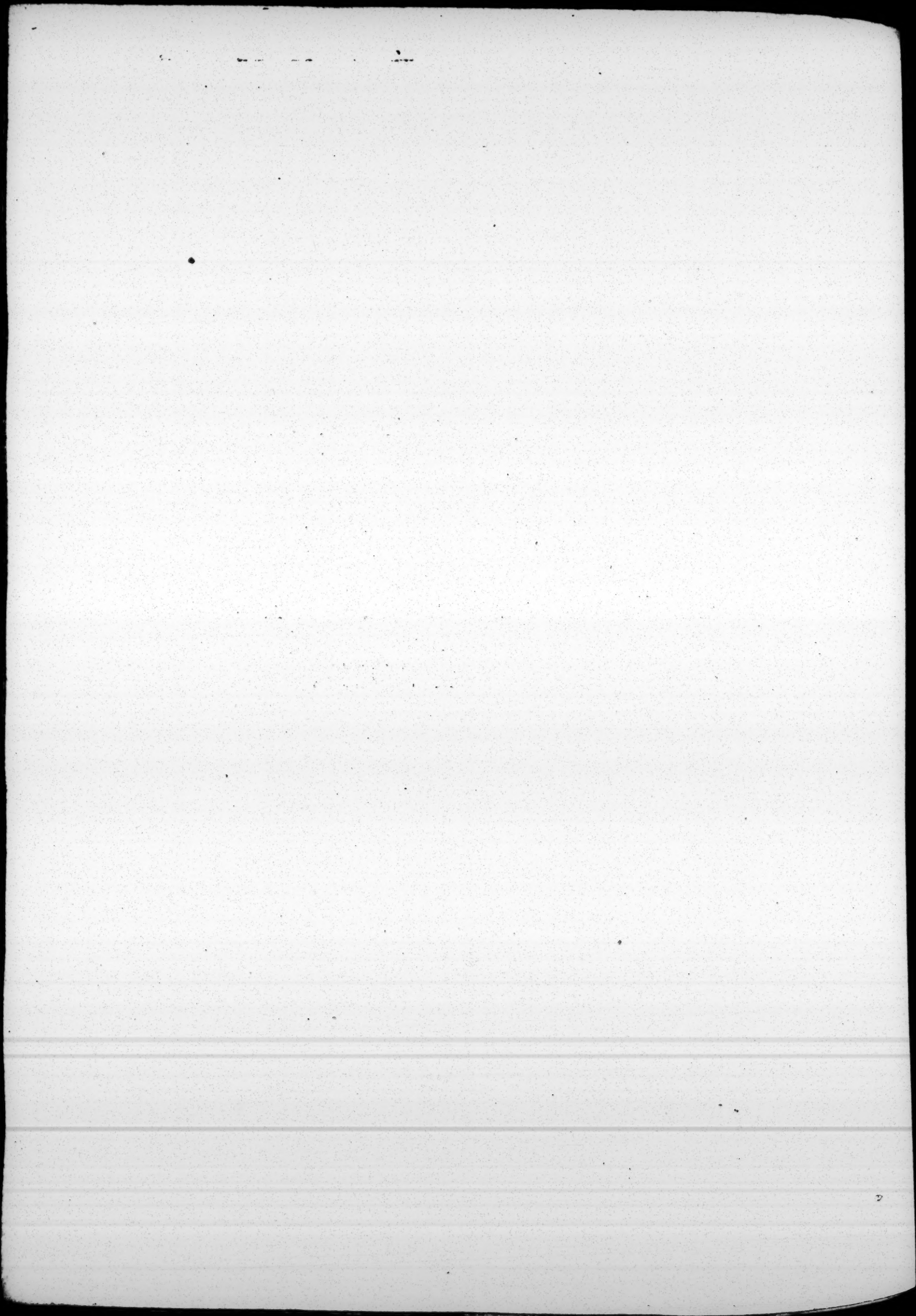
Newly translated by the Reverend Father *Le-  
zin de Sainte Scholaistique* ; Provincial of  
the Reformed Carmelites of *Touraine*.

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At P A R I S,  
For *Sebastian Cramoisy* in St. James's Street, at  
the sign of Fame. 1670.

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With the King's priviledge and approbation.





# TO THE READER.

**I***T is for the glory of God, as the first Author of the life of St. Bernard hath well remarked, to take care that the tapers of extraordinary virtue and holiness, which he continually lights up in his Church, to preserve and maintain it in its first purity, be neither extinguished, nor put under a bushel. And altho they cannot give them a clearer light, or place them upon a candlestick more glittering than that, upon which the sovereign Pastor of the Church places them, when he does solemnly canonize them, yet the remembrance of them might be lost in time, if God did not inspire some persons to put into writing the fairest actions of their life, to excite Christian people to imitate them upon earth, since they hope one day to partake of their glory in heaven.*

*This is the motive, which has made me undertake this abridgment of the life, death, and miracles of St. Mary Magdalene of Pazzi, lately made a Saint by our holy Father, Pope Clement IX. which I have extracted from her works, put together into one book in quarto, and divided into six parts, by Vincent Puccini, a secular Priest, Director and Confessor of the Monastery where she lived, and an eye-witness of the greatest part of what he writes of her, and from the Latine oration, pronounced in her honour before the sacred College of Cardinals, in the presence of his Holiness, in the affair of her canonization. Accept then, my dear Reader, this abridgment, drawn from those two Authors, till  
I can*

*I can present you with an entire translation of all her works, which shall be done as soon as the duty of my charge will permit.*

*The approbation of the Divinity-Readers of the Order.*

*We under-written Readers of Divinity, of the Order of the Carmelites, certifie, that we have read attentively the life of St. Mary Magdalene of Pazzi, a Carmelite Nunn of the antient observance, newly translated by the Reverend Father, Lezin of St. Scholastica, Provincial of the reformed Carmelites of the Province of Touraine, and have found nothing in it, but what is conformable to the orthodox faith, and to the lights, which God gives to Souls, which search him in Spirit and Truth. This is the testimony, which we render to truth. Done in our Convent of the very holy Sacrament of the Carmelites, aux Billets, at Paris, this 22th of October, 1669.*

*Fr. Columban du S. Esprit, Prior of the Convent of Carmelites des billets of Paris.*

*Fr. Irenée de Saint Jacques.*



*The life of St. Mary Magdalene of Pazzi, a Carmelite Nunn of the antient observance.*

1. **F**lorence, the chief City of *Tuscany*, no less abounding in Saints, which are the fruits of heaven, than in the riches and beauties of the earth, happily gave birth to *St. Mary Magdalene of Pazzi*, the second day of *April*, in the year one thousand five hundred sixty and six. Her Father was called *Camillo*, Son of *Gery*, Lord of *Pazzi*, and her Mother *Mary*, Daughter of *Laurence*, Lord of *Boudelmont*, both being of such illustrious houses, as they call *Great* in *Florence*. This Lady did not feel the whole time of her being with child with her, those illnesses and indispositions, which women are ordinarily subject to in that condition: at which we need not wonder, since that Christ one day in his most familiar entertainments declared to her, that *He had loved her, and had chosen her for his Spouse from her Mothers womb*: and the love, which God bears us, not being steril and void of effect, he might from that very moment, out of respect to her, exempt her Mother from those pains. She was called at the holy Font, when she was Christned, *Katharine*: but this name was changed into that of *Mary Magdalene*, when she took the sacred vail of religion. It was, that she might add the purity and generousness of a Virgin-heart to the fire and flames of love, which burnt in this latter Saint, and unite in her bosom all the virtues of both, as well as those of the great Saint, *St. Francis of Paula*, who honoured with his feast and memory the day of her birth.

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2. Scarce had she attained the age, in which we use our reason, but she began to distinguish soft delicate clothing from a coarse and austere habit, having in horror those rich Silk garments, which they would have given her, and rejecting them with tears; her passion being no other way to be appeased, till they had brought her thick and ugly ones of no value: which in my judgment, was a very certain mark of that austere and penitent life, which she was to lead one day in a Cloister: since that according to the words of Jesus Christ, *it is not in the desert, but in Kings courts, they wear soft and rich clothing*: and from that time this infant might say with St. Augustine, that which should be practised in all Monasteries, both of men and women, *de veste pretiosa erubesco*, I blush and am ashamed of the beauty and splendor of a rich and costly robe.

3. The love of Jesus Christ so strongly wrought upon her in those tender years, that she ordinarily made the poor, which came to the gate to be relieved, share with her in her breakfast in the morning, and in her collation at night.

From that very time the Spirit of Jesus Christ seemed to make himself master of her, and possess her fully. For her delight was to avoid the idle and trifling company of the girls of her age, and to retire apart, that she might entertain her self with his divine majesty in mental and vocal prayer: and when she quitted this solitude, it was to speak, or to hear others speak, of God, of the mysteries of our faith, and of the means of advancing in virtue. The time of her prayer was regulated to half an hour: but she oftentimes continued an entire hour at it: for as much as she had experienced the truth of those words of the  
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uncreated and incarnate wisdom, *those who eat me, shall still hunger; and those who drink me, shall remain always thirsty of me.* This made her search in the house for places most private and free from noise, that she might enjoy there in quiet the delightful entertainments of her divine husband: but if she was detained at any time about the management of the household affairs, she dispatcht them speedily, and returned to her dear and beloved retirement.

4. She had a relish and tast of the delights of the holy Communion, before that she was permitted by reason of her age to approach it, making it her business to converse and entertain her self with those, whom she knew had communicated that day, that she might enjoy the sweet perfumes, which seemed to exhale from them: and she greedily received the words, which came out of their mouths, as the words of God, with which she was perswaded they were replenisht. At ten years of age they permitted her to approach the holy table; and it was, I think, on holy *Thursday*, that contemplating the excess of the infinite love of Jesus, who had engaged to give himself to us in this adorable Sacrament, she consecrated her body and soul to him in the way of acknowledgment, by a vow of perpetual Virginity, being resolved to enter into a Monastery, as soon as she had means and opportunity, to preserve there that precious jewel of Paradise.

5. In the mean while, as the Spouse in the *Canticles*, languishing with love, demanded of her well beloved flowers and fruits to sustain her, that is, in the judgment of the most intelligent Interpreters of Scripture, the exterior practices of good works, where passing from the interior employment of contemplation, she might find some comfort and discharge from her trouble

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and wearisomness, this young lover, during her waiting the time of her retrait into a Cloister, busied herself in instructing little girls of her own age, whom she taught the first elements of the Christian doctrine: and to gain them to God, and to draw them into her company, she presented them with handkerchiefs, aprons, and other linnen which they had need of: and the Country furnishing her with more frequent occasions of prayer, and of the exercise of this sort of charity, she was much more pleased to be there than in the City: of which there was this evident proof, that she having begun to instruct a little girl of the Village, when they would have brought her back to the house, without permitting her to finish what she had undertaken, she fell a crying, as little children use to do, and would not be quiet, till they brought her little Catechist to the City with her.

6. Already the cross and the thorns, with which the head of her husband was crowned, saith St. *Jerom*, to bear the flowers of Virginity, had made such strong impressions upon her heart, that at the age of twelve years she made a Crown of very sharp pointed thorns, which she put upon her head, undergoing for the space of a whole night the sensible dolours of their piercing.

7. It was at that time, that Signore *Camillo* her father was obliged for the service of his Prince and the Republick, to make a voyage to *Cortona*, and being to make some stay there, he carryed with him the greatest part of his family, the young Damofel *Katharine* by the advise of the spiritual director of the family, was by a divine providence left alone, and committed to the care of the Nunns of St. *John* at *Florence*, to be instructed by them in virtue and all Christian behaviour, which a young Lady of her age and birth was not to be ignorant of.



8. The Nunns of that Monastery observed, that from that very time, she followed not the way and air of the world, which precipitates into hell, but of heaven and paradise, which makes Saints. She was so docile and pliant to obedience, that they could never perceive the least unwillingness in her to obey what was commanded her: and she was so constant at prayer, so humble, so modest, so charitable, that they judged, that she would one day equal St. *Gertrude*, St. *Katharine*, and St. *Theresa*.

9. Never did the thought of those enormous crimes which are committed in the world, come into her mind, but she melted into tears: but when she understood that there were in the Church men learned and zealous for the conversion of souls, she could scarce contain her self for the joy, which she derived thence. Her heart and mind were already so purified from all self-interest, that oftentimes she gave thanks to God, that there were souls, which surpass her in this zeal, and which rendred him much more service in the Church, than she could do, being fully perswaded, that more glory would redound to God from the good services of others than her own. So solidly was she bottomed in sentiments of a true humility. Nothing grieved and afflicted her so much, as to understand, that the Religious orders declined and fell into decay, and relaxed from that first exactness and vigour, in which they had been founded.

10. She visited oftentimes the sick sisters in the Infirmary, made them a spiritual Lecture out of some good book, and by her charming discourses engaged them to frequent the Sacraments of penance, and the holy Eucharist. And altho she busied her self very willingly in the practices of an active life, yet contemplation was

infinitely more agreeable to her. Sometime she continued four entire hours at prayer : at the end of which her soul seemed in such a manner swallowed up in the ocean of divine contemplation, that they might have taken her for an incarnate Seraphim, or for that divine lover in the *Canticles*, whose ravishing beauties are there described and delineated by her heavenly Husband.

11. The Nunns of this Convent passionately wisht to retain her, and to give her the habit of their order : but God had designed her elsewhere, and would enrich the holy mount *Carmel*, and the order of his most pure Mother with her. Her Father and Mother, after their return from *Cortona* to *Florence*, having taken her out of the Monastery of St. *John*, designed and wisht to marry her : but she remaining firm to her vow, and protesting, that they should sooner deprive her of her life, than of the desire and resolution she had made of becoming a Nunn ; they gave way. and after many tryals they had used to be satisfied about the truth and fixedness of her design, they consented to her retrait.

12. Two Monasteries presented themselves before her in the very point of her deliberation, and kept her mind a long time in suspense, before she knew how to determine, in which of them to enter. The strict observance of rules was exactly maintained in both. Both sent forth a very sweet favour of piety and religion through *Florence*. The one had for Father and Patriarch the great St. *Dominic*, and bore the name of the little Cross : the other combated under the glorious title of the Virgin-mother of God, and was called our Lady of Angels. In the first, the Nunns were so modest and so chaste, that they never unveiled themselves before men ; that which infinitely pleased our young Gentlewoman : the others lived so happily, that they were permitted to approach



approach every day the table of Angels : and these latter carryed her.

13. She entred then very happily upon the holy land of *Carmel*, on *Sunday* dedicated to the special worship of *Mary*, just before *Advent*, in the year 1582. That day fennight, being the feast of the Virgins immaculate conception, she had all the suffrages of the Nunns assembled in Chapter, to receive among them the holy habit, the thirtieth day of *January* 1683. Only two months had past, since heaven had taken away the seraphick Saint *Theresa*, that God, to recompence the order for that loss, sent this Saint into it, who was not in the least behind her in the ardors of seraphick love.

14. The Confessor of the Monastery, finishing the ceremony of habiting her, put into her hand a Crucifix, according to custom, whilst the Nunns sang in the Quire those ecstasical words of the great Apostle, *God forbid, that I should glory in any thing, but in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.* In that moment her heart being livelily penetrated and enlightned with the truth of those words, she forgetting all that was in the world, seemed to be melted, and dissolved, and wholly transformed into her crucified Jesus : so that she was used to say, that she never enjoyed more sensible and inward comfort.

15. In these sentiments of joy and triumph, which the holy Cloisture had inspired her with, she began immediately, and alwaies continued to kiss the walls and grates, which separated her from having to do with the world, and engaged her to the service of her God. From that time the Parlers, which she called markets and publick places, or at least rendezvouz, and places of assignation, were no less dreaded by her, than hell it self : she wishing to burn in Purgatory all the time she had lost and mis-spent in that place : and upon this  
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account it was, that the company of the men and women of the world, and even of her parents and kinsfolks were insupportable to her.

16. She past the year of her Noviciate in the common and ordinary practices of Novices, but in an air and manner, which was not common. Her will appeared all lost and dissolved into that of her superiors: her tongue was never loosed, but to answer modestly and in few words what was askt her, and her lips were never opened, but to chant with the Sisters the praises of God. If at any time she spake out of obedience, all her words were as so many burning arrows, which pierced the hearts of the Sisters, and enflamed them with the fire of divine love. Her visage was alwaies serene, her mind equal: the vilest offices of the house were those she loved best, and the courtest clothes she esteemed the most fit, never thinking her self more happy, than when she felt something of the rigors of religious poverty. In fine, it was alwaies she, which had done amiss, when something in common belonging to them all had not been done well, accusing her self, to excuse the other Nuns.

17. From her first entrance into these holy lists, she conjured with all possible earnestness the Mistress of the Noviciate, to make a fierce war upon all her natural inclinations, corrupted by sin, and upon all the evil habits which she had brought out of the world into the Cloister, without flattering or using them gently.

18. By these solid practices she was raised very high above her self, and thereby became capable of the sublimest lights of Paradise, which God is pleased usually to communicate to pure souls in prayer. It was there, in my judgment, that she began to discover the secret springs of the divine conduct upon her soul by a Prophetick



phetick spirit, as a daughter of the Prophetick order of the great *Elias*; as you shall see presently.

19. The year of her Noviciate being over, she had all the votes of the community to make her profession, with another, who was to do it at the same time. And that they might not be separated, her companion not being ready on the day, that the noviceship of our Sister *Mary Magdalene* was terminated, they resolved to retard the solemnity of her profession for some days. The news of which being brought her, she answered with great modesty and sweetness, *I shall not make my Profession with our dear Sister N. but you will be obliged to your great regret to let me do it by my self.* A little time after, O wonder of Providence! this poor Novice fell sick of a violent continual fever, accompanied with a great cough, which reduced her to extremity: so that by the advice of four Physicians, the ablest of that great City, who had given her over, they were obliged to hasten the time, which they had set to receive her vows, and to admit her to be Profest alone. The ceremony was at her earnest request performed in an Oratory dedicated to the holy Virgin, at the end of the Infirmary, where they placed a little bed at the foot of the Altar, whither she was carryed (altho they were of opinion, that she could not be lifted out of her bed without danger of death) on *Trinity Sunday* 1584. in the seventeenth year of her age.

20. What shall we say of this happy concurrence, rencounter, or event? Is it, that Sister *Mary Magdalene* was not to have a companion in her consecration to the service of her husband, since she could not have one equal to her in her fidelity to him? Is it not rather, that the holy Trinity, whom she adored with peculiar devotion, was willing to reserve her peculiarly for their temple,

temple, and take that day a full and entire possession of her. In truth, there is some ground for this. For after the ceremony was performed, they carried her back upon her bed to the Infirmary, where she desired, that they would draw the curtains, that she might take some rest. But, O God! what sleep, what repose! it was a sleep of ecstasy and of ravishment, like to that of the loving and beloved disciple *St. John*, when he lay in the bosom of his Master at his last supper. For the Sister, who had the charge of the Infirmary, returning an hour after, and not hearing her to cough, as she was wont, nor perceiving her to stir, drew the curtain softly, and found this holy soul ravished with ecstasy, her countenance red as a rose, her eyes open and fixt upon a Crucifix, which was at her beds feet, and her whole body without breath, motion, or sense. The Prioress having had notice of it, came running with all the Sisters of the Convent to the Infirmary, who saw this wonder, and praised the Author of it.

21. This favour was not flitting: her divine husband celebrated this feast with his Spouse the space of forty days together: for so long these ravishments continued. They seized upon her every morning in the very moment after the holy Communion, and held two full hours, during which she discoursed so profoundly of divine and spiritual matters, and of that, which past between her sacred husband and her self, his Spouse, that she filled the Nunns, which heard her, with admiration, and enflamed their hearts with divine love. These extraordinary favours of heaven restored health to her by degrees, without any humane succor.

22. The Mother-Prioress, by the advice of the elder Sisters, thought it expedient to bring this young profest Nunn from the Noviciate, as well for many reasons, which



which the prudent conduct of the house dictated to her, as to give her more leisure and opportunity for devotion, to which she was extraordinarily called. But after she had humbly testified her ardent desire to continue under the direction and governance of the Mistress of the Noviciate, and to be treated as the meanest and most imperfect of all the Sisters, they complied with her.

23. In this state of humiliation and humility, her graces were redoubled: she was almost every day ravished with ecstasy, and in these ravishments she spake of things so ravishing, so agreeable and so sublime, that they evidently appeared to pass the natural capacity of a maid of seventeen years. The Mother-Prioress, by the advice of the Confessor of the house, appointed two Nuns to write and gather the precious pearls of those divine discourses, which proceeded from her mouth, for fear they would be lost otherwise: so after her death they were printed in Italian, and translated into Latine by *Andrew du Chasteau-royal*, a Carmelite Fryer of the ancient observance, in one volume in folio, divided into seven books, and which will within a little time be put into French for the edification of all Christian people, but especially of religious souls. In these ecstatical entertainments she spake the language of the Saints. For without ever having learned Latine, or read the Fathers of the Church, she recites passages out of them in their own language, and gives an admirable sense and meaning of them.

24. Scarce had she finished the seventeenth year of her age, and the first of her religious profession, but God willing to lay in her soul the solid foundations of humility, poverty, and Evangelical austerity, to raise thereupon the tower of Christian perfection, whose utmost point reaches to heaven, and approaches to perfect

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union and consummation of man with his divine majesty, inspired her with such a manner of living, the most austere and rigorous, that has been seen in the Church for several ages.

25. It began the 29th of May 1585. at what time she was employed in the offices of the house, *facta est super eam manus Domini, the hand of God sensibly came upon her in an instant*, as upon the Prophets of old, with such impetuosity, that leaving her work, she ran to the Oratory, as her holy Father St. Elias had sometime done before the Chariot of Ahab. Where being come, she fell upon the ground half dead, and after some space of time, cryed out aloud, *Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?* It was answered her at the ear of her heart, that *it was the will of God, that she should live only upon bread and water for the space of five years, except on Festival days, when she might eat Lenten fare*; she replied, that *she would not only obey that command, but she offered to live after that manner a thousand years, if it were his will, to satisfy any way whatever his divine justice, so grievously provoked by the sins of men.* Nevertheless she durst not so soon discover to the Prioress this order of heaven, fearing, not without reason, the singularity of it, and being sufficiently perswaded, that they would not suffer her to undergo an austerity of life, which seemed to surpass her strength, and the delicateness of her complexion. But in a second ecstasy, which followed two days after, a voice was heard distinctly, which spake to her, *crastina die nihil gustabis, nisi panem & aquam: & si hoc non facies, retraham abs te oculos meos; you shall tast nothing to morrow but bread and water, but if you do otherwise, I will withdraw my eyes from you*: the Saint answered, *non moriar sed vivam, & adimplebo opera tua, I shall not die but live, and fulfil thy works.* Being recovered from this ecstasy, she went



went to find out the Prioress, and afterward her Confessor, and to both she communicated what had hapned: but neither of them judged it fit to permit such austerity, and commanded her to eat what was served upon the table, until that God should give more certain marks and proofs of his will: as it hapned the day following. For when she, wholly made up of obedience, was dutifully disposed to eat the ordinary portion of the Community with the Sisters, her stomach could not bear one morcel, insomuch that it rejected up all with strange violences. Which hapning four days together, they were obliged to obey God, and to leave her to do what she would her self. It was the 25th of *May*, the festival of *St. Zenobius*, Archbishop and Patron of *Florence*, when she entred upon this new life, and the same day that she dyed three and twenty years after.

26. The zeal of her husband advanced further in the design, which he had to render her perfectly conformable to himself: for two years and some months after, the fifth of *July*, as she was attending the Nunns in the Refectory, the Spirit of God threw her upon the ground into an ecstasy, out of which she being recovered, after many discourses, which were most highly spiritual, she untied her shoes and stockins before all the Nunns, and threw them upon the ground, and with great fierceness run into her chamber, and got up all the furniture of it, without reserving any thing but a Crucifix, two boards to lye upon, with a coverlet and pillow; then betaking her self to the wardrobe of those Sisters, which are not the servants of the Convent, she chose the oldest, and the worst habit, and that which had been most used, which she put upon her bare flesh with a scapulary and girdle without any other cloths: and making up the rest into a little bundle, she brought it

to the apartment of the Prioress, and put it into her hands: and then went strait to the Church, where she sang aloud in the way of thanksgiving, *Te Deum laudamus*: after which, she got upon the Altar, where was an image of the holy Virgin in relieve, and wrote in a paper a new Profession in these very words.

I Sister *Mary Magdalene of Pazzi*, make my profession, and promise to God, and to his most holy Mother, to *St. Katharine of Siena*, to the seraphick Father *St. Francis*, and to all the heavenly Court, obedience, poverty, and chastity, after the manner, which God gives me now at this present to understand, with a firm resolution never to forsake the way I enter upon this day, unless God reveals to me, that his will is otherwise; and howsoever, trusting in his grace and mercy, I make this my Profession in the hands of the purity of *Mary*. Whilst she wrote this with one hand, she put the other upon the hand of the Virgins image, continuing ecstatic, and speaking of the benefits and advantages of religious poverty, with that sublimity of language, that it well appeared, that it was the Spirit of God, who governed her tongue, as well as her mind.

27. This ravishment being over, she went to find her superior, and throwing her self humbly at her feet, desired with all possible earnestness, leave of her to accomplish the designs of God upon her. The Prioress, desiring to do nothing without advice, and having conferred with the director of the Monastery, with joynt consent, they commanded this poor victim of obedience and love, to retake her habit, and to put on her shoes and be clothed like the rest. She readily obeyed: but the very next morning, after the Communion, falling again into an ecstasy, and prest by the same spirit, she tore off her shoes and cloths, and put on the oldest habit she could



could meet with, with the scapulary and girdle, without any other vestment: of which the Priorefs being advertised, she went to the place, where she was, and found her countenance shining, like that of an incarnate Seraphim, and uttering these words: *Sweet Jesus, I will obey thee, as long as thou shalt be with me: but when thou shalt retire into heaven, I will do that, which they shall order me.*

28. In short, after many proofs, God was to be obeyed, who required this rigorous penitence of his servant; see how it was brought about.

29. Scarce a month had past from the time, that she out of obedience had returned to the common method of a regular life, but that on the seventh of *August*, a day dedicated to the memory of *St. Albert*, one of the most illustrious children of the holy Virgin in this order of *Carmel*, she was assaulted with so sharp a pain in her feet, that she could not stand upright nor walk. They were afraid, that this was nothing but an illusion of the Devil to deceive her. Upon which accompt they commanded her, upon her obedience, to walk: she endeavoured to do it, but in vain: for she was as little able to sustain her self upon her feet, as upon her hair: and from the straining she used, tears fell from her eyes: so that she might not disobey the command of the Priorefs, she was forced to crawl upon her hands and knees, and at last they knew clearly, that it was a miracle: and the Priorefs, the better to be convinced of it, ran to find her, and spake to her, *My Sister, if you believe, it is the will of God, I permit you to go barefoot, and to wear only one gown.* Then the servant of God, fully glad of having obtained this license, threw off her shoes and hose, and went barefoot winter and summer. And when the Nunns, during the severity of winter, endeavoured to

to wrap some linnen about her feet, which she had oftentimes cut and bloudied, she thanked them kindly for their good offices, and told them, *Let me suffer, let me suffer for my sins, since Jesus Christ will have it so.*

30. These rigorous austerities were nothing in comparison of the agonies, faintings, desolations, and inward pains and anguish of mind, which she suffered during the five years of severe tryal. For her divine husband to make this rigorous exercise of love more meritorious, gave her a view of them, before he approached, that she might prepare and offer her self willingly, and thereby render her self more agreeable, and acquire a greater merit: all which she performed generously. It was upon the eve of *Whitsunday* 1585. a year after her religious profession, that there was represented to her mind a horrible and dreadful place, full of Devils of monstrous shapes; she called it the lake of Lions. A voice spake to her inwardly, that she should be thrown in there, and be abandoned to the fury of those monsters of hell, the space of five years. Upon her first sight of this dreadful spectacle, her heart grew cold, and her countenance pale, as if she had fallen into an agony, and in the same instant she cryed out, *I call heaven and earth to my aid, and beseech all the inhabitants of heaven to come and help me. O God, where is the sun of thy grace and favour? is the light of it eclipsed from before my eyes? What, Lord, wilt thou abandon me, all alone, to the mercy of my enemies? see how I am as one stricken with the palsy, or as a dead and dry tree, which no more receives the influences of heaven.* Nevertheless she had in this condition some assurances from heaven, that during these combats, she should continue under the protection of the holy Virgin, her Mother and Protectress, of St. Michael, and her guardian Angel, and of the Saints, her Patrons and  
Protectors,



protectors, whom she invoked every day, that they would not forsake her, and that they would hinder her from falling into sin.

31. Five furious devils attacked her one after another, and made a cruel war upon her: the first tempted her with blasphemy and infidelity; the second, with pride and presumption; the third, with gluttony; the fourth, with lasciviousness; and the fifth, with despair. At the same time, all her spiritual exercises were grown distasteful: and for that she was never tempted more furiously, than after she had received the holy Communion: she could not be of any other persuasion, but that she had committed sacrilege, as often as she had approached it. This horrible sight of Devils terrified her, and haunted and pursued her in all places. Sometimes they throw her down from the top of the stairs: sometimes they bit her under the shape of vipers and serpents: sometimes they seemed to devour her, like so many hungry Lions; so that she had no manner of repose either day or night.

32. She armed her self against these furious assaults with the buckler of prayer, accompanied with extraordinary fasts and penances, which she added to her bundle of myrrh. Sometimes she continued whole weeks without receiving any nourishment, besides what she had from the holy Eucharist. She girt her self with a large girdle, pointed with iron, which she did not put off, when she went about any business: she used sharp whips with chains of iron, even to effusion of blood. One time when she was assaulted by the Devil *Asmodeus*, she rolled her self all naked upon faggots of thorn, which she found in the woodhouse. She served in the Kitchen and Infirmary, there being no labour either vile or painful enough for her.

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33. Two things among others served her particularly to make her victorious over this hellish canaille. The first was the protection of the holy Mother of God, to whom she had alwaies recourse in the most furious assaults of her enemies. One day being mightily tempted to despair, a thing very surprizing, she took up a knife in the Kitchen to kill her self. The Virgin *Mary* presently came into her thoughts whom she invoked, and she presently betakes her self to the Quire, and puts the knife between the hands of the Image of the holy Virgin, who at the same instant restored quiet to her troubled spirit. At another time being violently pressed by the suggestion of her enemy to leave the Cloister, under a specious pretence of piety and of zeal for the salvation of souls, she took up the keys of the Convent, which lay in the chamber of the Prioress, and deposited them in the hands of the same Image of the H. Virgin, her refuge and sanctuary in her most pressing necessities and most violent temptations.

34 The second means, that she found effectual against all assaults of the Devil, was her fidelity and care of discovering them readily to her superiors and to her Confessor: from whom she concealed nothing, which past in her soul, whether good or ill, submitting her self wholly to their conduct, of which see some evident proofs.

35. One day the Devil appeared to her under the vail of two Nunns, the one habited in white, and the other in black: they both had the visage and appearance of great sanctity: both put themselves forward to tell her gravely, that this singularity of life could not please God, and that if she persisted in it, without all doubt she would fall into his disfavour. Our *Mary Magdalen* ran to the Prioress, and discovered what had hapned.

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The Prioress assured her, that it was a trick of the evil spirit, and ordered her to continue her usual practices. That which she did without any difficulty, and with all assurance. At another time, resenting those disgusts and dissatisfactions, whereof we have spoken, at her approaches to the holy table, the Prioress upon her discovery of it, commanded her to approach with humility, without any farther deliberation. Which she doing, her pains ceased.

36. At the expiration of five years, she got out of this gulph, and seemed to pass from Purgatory to a delicious Paradise. It was on the eve of *Whitsunday*, whilst they were singing *Te Deum* at Mattens, that being cast into an ecstasy, her divine husband made her very sensible in her soul, that the rigors of winter were past, and the storms and tempests dissipated and allayed : she felt inwardly, that the beauty and sweetness of the spring, which the Spouse in the *Canticles* speaks of, would succeed. In this ravishment, her husband promised her, that for that dreadful sight of Devils, with which she had been so cruelly harassed, she should enjoy from that time forward his dear presence, in a way so intimate and charming, that he would never forsake her. Upon which, her mind being full of joy, she chanted forth that verse of the Psalmist, *He hath delivered me from the hand of my enemies, and has covered them with confusion. Lord, thou hast made me pass through fire and water, to the end, that thou mayest bring me to this refreshment.*

37. Her fidelity in so long and harsh a combat merited to receive from his bountiful hand five graces or signal privileges, wherewith he gratified her. The first was, that he gave her a clear knowledge of the beauty and grandeur of the reasonable soul : that which made her set an inestimable value upon it: and hence proceeded

ceeded her ardent zeal, wherewith her soul was enflamed, for their salvation : so that she would willingly have given a thousand lives, if she had had them, (that is, die and revive so many times again, as she explained her self in a divine conference with her husband) to draw them back from sin, and to acquire for them the assurances of a blessed life hereafter. The second was, that he gave her his own heart, in the presence of St. *Angel*, a martyr of her order, and of St. *Katharine* of *Siena*. The third was, that he honoured her with the noble quality of his Spouse, placing a crown of thorns upon her head, and imprinting the sacred stigmata or wounds upon her feet, hands, and side : although at her prayer they lay concealed from the eyes of men. The fourth, that he made her partaker of his own divine purity, both in body and soul. The last was, a divine knowledge infused of the most sublime and elevated mysteries of our faith, of which she discoursed in terms so proper, so efficacious and energetical, that they sensibly touched the hearts of those, who heard her, surprizing and filling them with admiration. It is, according to the opinion of St. *Bernard*, from this perfect knowledge, and singular penetration of mind into the most hidden mysteries of our faith, that the Virgins, which follow the lamb wheresoever he goeth, are glorified, bearing his holy name, and the name of the holy city of the heavenly *Jerusalem*, graven upon their forehead, and chanting a new song, which is unknown to the rest of the blessed. It seems to me, that this singular gift of divine understanding and knowledge, was communicated to her, when St. *Augustine* at two different times engraved upon her heart these four words, *Verbum caro factum est*, the word was made flesh : the first time in letters of blood, to communicate to her a perfect knowledge of the super-  
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eminent love of Jesus Christ for mankind, when he died upon the cross: the second time in letters of gold, to make her comprehend, as much as is possible, in this sad banishment, what is the length and the breadth, the height and the depth of the Ocean of the Divinity, according to the prayer, which *St. Paul* made to the Father of lights in favour of Christians.

38. Since her leaving the lake of Lions, by the order of heaven, and by the advice of her director and superiors, she moderated somewhat her rigorous austerities: she put on her shoes and stockings, eat flesh, principally on *Sundays*, and drank a little wine on *Thursdays* by the prescription of her Physicians for the weakness of her stomach: but she never habited her self in warmer or more commodious cloths; so that one day the Prioress taking pity of her, deceived her cunningly, making her take a new vestment, as if she had given it her in the way of alms.

39. Some few months after her profession, Jesus Christ took upon him to have the care of conducting her soul to virtue, giving her in one of her ecstasies twelve rules of perfection, which she observed so faithfully, that every month she had a day of retreat to examine her self, and to discover where she had been wanting; and afterwards disciplined her self severely to punish her miscarriages, and to awaken her heart to be just in these practices and promises.

40. She had also composed a spiritual exercise of a consummate perfection, which she repeated every morning, and put in practice that day, without failing. We will not set it down, because it is somewhat long: but the Protestations which she made, were these following.

1. I protest to chuse in all things the most profound humility.

2. I protest to confess and adore the unity of the most holy Trinity, for all those, who do not adore.

3. I protest to exalt poverty in all things.

4. I protest to succour, as much as shall be in my power, all those, who labour under the afflictions of this miserable life.

5. I protest to build all my works, as well interior as exterior, upon the solid rock, which is Jesus Christ, and to hide them in his wounds.

6. To make up all the faults, which shall be committed in the house of *Mary*, and to be for them an expiatory sacrifice.

7. To be alwaies as far removed from the corruption of the age, and of the world, as heaven is from earth.

8. To delight in contempt and confusion, as God delights in himself: for that confusion is my center, as God is his own proper center, and that in all beings created and universal.

9. I will delight my self with God, and in poverty of spirit, and will suffer a thousand deaths, rather than hinder the creature from rejoycing in God their Saviour.

10. I protest to condole with God for all the offences, which are committed against his divine Majesty.

41. Afterwards, when she had rendred her homage to the holy Virgin, she ended with a protestation, that she made to her, that she would chuse hell, rather than not keep up the zeal of duty and observance in her house: to her Angel Guardian, to comply faithfully with all the lights and inspirations, which God should communicate to her by his Ministry: to the Saints in general, to honour their memory religiously, to worship their reliques; and above all, to imitate them in the practice of true and solid virtues.

42. She was but three and twenty years of age, when  
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they trusted her with the government of the Noviciate, without the least apprehension of her want of experience, discretion, or wisdom, for a charge so important, as is that over the Novices, and those who are newly professed. She was endowed with a good natural genius, very clear and penetrating, of a serene and modest countenance, of an agreeable discourse, and of admirable prudence for the guidance of souls in the strait paths of Christian perfection. There appeared upon her brow I know not what rays of light and holiness, which gained innocent souls to God, and affrighted the libertines and the ungodly. This evidently appeared one day, that whilst she accompanied a Novice to the Parlour, who was asked for by her brother, the young man looking wistfully upon the Mother, observed rays of light to dart from her countenance, which put him into such a consternation, that he went away immediately without saying one word, as if he had been struck with thunder or lightning, which had bereft him of the use of his reason: but the same light, which affrighted him, did also comfort him, and made such lively impressions upon his heart, that he was converted, and changed his life, and regulated his manners, which before to that time had been very dissolute.

43. Her presence alone inspired good thoughts into the Novices, and her example yielded incomparably more effectual instruction to them, than her discourses; tho' they being seasoned with the salt of wisdom, were infinitely useful and agreeable. If they were sullied with any fault or imperfection, they could not support her presence, till they had cleared themselves, either by self-accusation, or by sacramental confession.

44. She was enlightned with a marvellous heavenly light, by which she penetrated into the most inward and hidden

hidden folds of the conscience, to find out their spiritual estate, to discover their faults, and to apply the most proper and efficacious remedies. For which reason the Confessors and Directors of the Convent, and others without, sent persons to her, upon whom they could do no good ; but she rid them of their trouble, applyed remedies to their distempers, and sent them away in peace.

45. Her zeal to prosecute vice was accompanied with singular prudence and sweetness ; so that if on the one hand, she caused a dread to fall upon vicious and loose persons, and mastered their fierceness with one glance of her eye, on the other, she quieted the timorous with a single word. She had received it as a rule from her husband, never to counsel or command any one, till she had first consulted and lookt upon the cross, and never to reprove any of her inferiors, till she had before reflected upon her own infirmities. That which she observed very carefully.

46. Her humility took from her the knowledge of that sublime state of virtue and perfection, to which God had raised her: altho the Nunns were well satisfied about it : which she perceiving, she oftentimes laboured to overthrow the opinion which they had of her, by publickly acquainting them with her weakneses and imperfections. She made less account of her body, than of a kitchen-clout ; for which reason there was no labour so base, mean, and painful, in which she would not be employed.

47. Her charity put her upon it, that in the night, in which she never slept above five hours, following the rule, that Christ had prescribed her, she would discharge the other Nunns from their painful and laborious services, that in the day time by agreement they might be more at leisure in her company for the spiritual exercises  
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of prayer, meditation, and contemplation. And to revenge her self of the tyranny of sleep, which had been too hard for her, before she had acquired a habit of sleeping little, she awakened her self with her discipline, and soon went about her business, cunningly dissembling her infirmities, for fear she should be obliged to repose her self.

48. She never neglected to prepare her self for prayer, tho her life was nothing but one continual prayer, ecstasy, or contemplation. On the *Saturday* she collected from the Gospel of the following *Sunday* the matter and argument of her meditations for all the week, teaching her daughters to do the same.

49. One of her principal concerns in her prayers was, to pray to God alwaies for the holy Church, having often in her mouth these words; *O my dear Sisters, we do not merit the title of the Spouses of Jesus Christ, if we are not careful to recommend seriously to his divine Majesty the necessities of the Church, his true and lawful Spouse.* But if she perceived, that any one of those, who were subject to her, had been defective herein, she could not pardon that fault.

50. O how many times have they seen her, drunk with zeal, for the conversion of sinners and infidels, run about the Cloisters, in the garden, and other places of the Monastery, bemoaning her self, that neither her sex nor her condition would permit her to go abroad to gain erring and lost souls, wishing that she had a voice, strong enough to be heard in all parts of the habitable world, to invite them to the faith, and to a change of their licentious and irregular life. Sometimes she said, *O Jesus, grant me, for thy goodness sake, the salvation of so many souls, as I shall take steps this day. Ah! how do I envy those little birds in the air, which fly every where, and*  
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*make every one hear the sweet harmony of their voice. Ah! if I could fly over the earth, I would chant aloud the new song of thy beautiful love.*

51. At other times they have seen her, holding a Crucifix in her hand, rapt into an ecstasy, and crying out, *O Jesus, God of love! thou hast been willing to die upon a gibbet for sinners; and I will willingly give my blood and my life upon the same account: and if once be not enough, let me die and rise again every day to the end of the world, if I can by my death obtain any thing in order to their salvation. Yea, pour upon me all the torments, which their sins deserve, and pardon them: I will endure them with a good heart.* On the eve of the festival of St. Katharine in the year 1588. seeing in an ecstasy the horrible blasphemies and other abominable wickednesses, which are committed every day in the world, she cried out, *The pains of hell have encompassed me on every side. O God, my infinite love, I can do no more: if sinners will not cease from sin, and purge their souls of their enormous crimes, take away my life, or at least take from me the sight of these abominations.*

52. The very bare name of mortal sin made her tremble even to the very marrow of her bones, and having her soul upon her lips, ready to expire, she said, that she should go out of the world, without being able to comprehend, how a reasonable man, made and created by God after his image, redeemed by his blood, and designed for heaven, could be able to resolve to commit voluntarily a mortal sin. It was her zeal for the good of souls, which obliged her to conjure the Queen Mother *Mary de Medicis*, Grandmother of our invincible Monarch, when she went to take leave of her, and to recommend herself to her prayers, being then about to leave *Florence*, and to begin her journey to *France*, to conjure her, I say, to make use of all her power for the conversion  
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of hereticks, and reducing them to the Catholick faith.

53. This love for her neighbour had for its principle the love of God, whose lively flames consumed our Saint. Her life, to say the truth, having been nothing else but one continued ecstacy, and ecstacy, as the divine Areopagite teaches, being the proper effect of love, what can be said of *Mary Magdalene de Pazzi* any other, than that love was her life? sometimes she cryed out with eyes lifted up to heaven, *O love! o love! o love! the love, which thou hast for thy creatures, is too great. No, it is not too great for Thee, since thou art love it self by nature, and that thy disciple of love could find no definition to explain thy essence and proprieties by, but in calling Thee love. Deus est charitas, God is love: but this is too much for a vile creature, as I am. Cease then to pour upon my heart these torrents of love: for it is not capable to support them.*

54. At another time, holding a Crucifix in her hand, she ran about the Convent with incredible vehemence and fervour, and casting forth fires and flames of love through all the gates of her senses, she cryed out, *O love, I will never cease, no never; I will never cease to call you my love, my hope, and my all.* Then turning to the Sisters, who attended her, she said, *Know you not that my Jesus is my love? you are neither known nor loved, o my love: this is the reason, why they reproach you; you are naked, you are wandring, and without shelter; Come then, I offer you my heart to lodge there, and if it be not long, large, high, and deep enough, dilate it, till it shall be able to comprehend and contain you fully.*

55. Love hath two singular properties: the first is to delight it self in singing the praises of its well-beloved, when he is absent, and expecting a perfect union and enjoyment. *Cantare amantis est: Vox cantoris, fervor dile-*

*Etionis*, says St. Augustine. It is proper to a lover to sing: the voice of this singer is the fervor of his love. Our Saint Mary Magdalene had nothing that pleased her so much at the heart, as to sing the praises of God in the Quire with the Nunns. She was never absent either day or night, unless confined to her bed by some violent sickness. For this reason she had all her life the care upon her to awaken the Nunns at midnight, to be present at Mattins, where she was alwaies the first, and went out the last. It hapned once, that she mist being at Vespers, accompanying a Sister to the Parlour, whom she could not leave: for which she had so quick a sense of penitence in the bottom of her heart, that to discharge it, she disciplined her self till the blood came, accusing her self, and saying aloud, that for this absence she could not hope to sing the praises of God with the Angels in heaven, since she had neglected to break off a conversation with secular persons, and to sing with her Sisters in the Quire.

56. The second propriety of love, is to suffer for the lover, and to sympathize with his pains. It is not easie to report here in few words, what our Mary Magdalene hath done and suffered for her well-beloved.

The devise of St. Theresa was, *either to suffer or to die*: that of our Saint, *not to die, but to live to suffer*: and indeed she repeated very often, *I am not forward and in hast to go to Paradise, for that is not a place of suffering but delight. This, in my opinion, is what is wanting to the state of the blessed.*

57. But what shall we say of the admirable effects, which the love of compassion produced in the soul and body of this holy Carmelite, and of that, which she suffered on Tuesday in the holy week 1592? Her Saviour pressed by the earnest prayers of his faithful lover, gave her a considerable share of the myrr-pofy of his passion,  
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of all whose agonies she had a quick sense. And the torments encreasing to the last extremity, on *Friday* morning, her countenance lookt pale and gasty, as that of one in the point of death: the parts of her body were cold as ice; her body weak and brought very low, and deprived of sense. Great drops of sweat fell from her forehead, and tears from her eyes: her stomach swelling extraordinarily, cast out at her mouth a white foam. The Nunns, which were present at this sad spectacle, fearing lest she should be suffocated, loosed her girdle, and opened her gown at the breast to give her air: then with a sweet voice, but somewhat complaining, she cryed out, *O Jesus, I can endure no longer, I cannot partake any more of thy pains.* It was in this ecstasy, that she learned, that our Saviour expiring upon the Cross, bowed his head toward the ground to convey his spirit of life into the hearts of mortal men.

58. In another ecstasy, which continued six and twenty hours, on the *Thursday* and *Friday* of the holy week of another year, visiting divers places of the Monastery, she felt in her body a lively image of all our Saviour's passion, imitating it, and representing his dolorous stations, as if she had followed him step by step.

59. She seemed first to enter into the garden of Olives, where she felt the agonies of his deadly sorrow, from which place, as if they had loaded her with irons, and bound her strait with cords, she passed through the Cloisters, as He passed through the streets of *Jerusalem*, appearing before the different tribunals of *Annas*, *Caiaphas*, and *Pilate*. She was tyed to a pillar and cruelly whipt, crowned with thorns, shewn to the people, and then loaded with a Cross, and thus going to the Oratory, which is the inward chappel of the Monastery, where their spiritual discourses and entertainments are held,

and where the Novices say the office of the Virgin, when they have not recited it in the quire of the Church, there, I say, lying upon her back upon the ground, she stretcht out her feet and hands, that they might be nailed to the Cross: and after half an hour of silence, she raises her self upon her feet, all stiff, as she was, without bending arms or legs, throwing her self with her back against the wall, she pronounced distinctly the seven words of our Saviour upon the Cross. To that, *all is finished*, she added, *now is the work of redemption compleated. The work of the communication of thy sufferings is consummated. The work of our reunion is finished in me.* In fine, pronouncing those last words of the holy Evangelist, *and having bowed his head, he gave up the Ghost.* She was about to fall to the ground with great impetuosity, if the Nunns, who were present, had not received her in their arms. Upon her coming out of this ecstasy, she appeared beautiful as an Angel of heaven, and seemed to participate also of the resurrection of her Saviour, as well as of his Cross.

60. They have seen her oftentimes in these amorous transports of the word made flesh, and dying in the flesh, for his love, take in her hand a Crucifix, tie it upon her breast, unloosen it from the Cross, wipe it with her breast-cloth and other linnen, which by a miracle hitherto unheard of, became wet and moist with the sweat, which came thence. Sometimes she joyned her self so close to the wound of the side of that image, that she suckt a divine liquor thence, which filled her soul with unspeakable sweetness.

61. If she had a good share of the dolours of the passion of Jesus Christ, she had no less of the lights of his glory, and of the splendors of his eternal generation. Three different nights successively she was admitted to  
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the cabinet of the most holy Trinity, and saw things, which may be tasted by the favour of the gift of wisdom, but which cannot be explained by words. Once as she sang with her Sister-Nunns at the canonical hours in the quire, her heart was so inflamed with the love and reverence of these three adorable persons, that she seemed to be dissolved, and about to return to her first nothing: so that the colours of death appeared upon her face, and they believed in effect, that she was ready to expire.

62. In the year 1592. she had such private and familiar entertainments with the first person of the most holy Trinity, that He vouchsafed to shew her after what manner she ought to prepare her self for the holy Communion. All these graces and divine communications kindled in her breast the fire of love, whereof we have spoken, so ardent and so vigorous, that she cryed out oftentimes, *O love! I can no longer support your flames. O love! reenter into your self: my heart is not capable to contain and support you.* And it was necessary, that she should fetch a bason of cold water to put her arms in, and to pour it upon her breast, in order to cool her self.

63. Nevertheless she laid no stress upon the multitude and abundance of all these sensible favours: since she often prest her husband to dry up the source of them, and to open that of the bitter gall of his passion: and when she could not obtain this favour, she entreated him most earnestly, that at least they might remain secret between him and her. That which made her, whenever she met with any memoirs, which the Nunns had made concerning her, either tear them in pieces, or else throw them in the fire.

64. It would be altogether superfluous, in my opinion, to

to speak of the excellency of her faith, since faith is that solid foundation, upon which all the graces, of which we have discoursed, are raised, and the fruitful spring, from which they flow. *Faith*, faith an antient father of the Church, is *the resplendent mirrour of love, in which fires are kindled. Fides charitatis est speculum.* This hath appeared evidently in our Saint, who was so lively penetrated with the truths comprised in our Creed, and so disposed to receive the flames, which they are apt to kindle in pure souls, that they have seen her oftentimes cast into an ecstasy in repeating it, as hapned to her in her last sickness; as we shall shew hereafter, and twice before Cardinal *Alexander de Medicis* Archbishop of *Florence*, and afterward Pope under the name of *Leo* the XIth, to whom our Saint had predicted, that he should be promoted to the soveraign throne of the Church. That, which was not difficult to foresee, since his excellent qualities called him to it. But she advertised him, that this glory should pass away in a moment; which could not be known but from God. The event justified her prophecy; for he died the 26th day after his elevation to the soveraign Pontificate.

65. She had spent almost her whole life in instructing the youth of the Convent, in the employment of Mistress of the Novices and of the seminary, when they were willing to chuse her sub-prioress: and tho she shewed an extreme repugnance, yet she at last submitted, not knowing what it was to disobey. But after she had discharged this employment about eight days, she was obliged by a sharp and continual fever, accompanied with a cough, to take her bed. Her distemper was so grievous for the space of five years, that no person durst touch her. The least motion touched her so to the quick: and all lookt upon her as another *Job* upon



upon a dunghil, and as a spectacle of sorrows. But this did not hinder her every morning from rising to hear Mass, and to communicate with the Sisters.

When they designed to keep her to her bed, she protested, *that she would rather die, than be deprived, tho' but for one day, of the participation of that holy Table, which supported her in the greatest pains of her body, and in those horrible agonies, with which her soul was harraught.*

67. It seems, that the condition she was in, was the effect of her earnest prayers. For one day a Nunn observing, that she was not tired with suffering, and that her desire went on encreasing with her bitterest sorrows, asked her in confidence, if she had not suffered enough, during the five years of her purgatory in the lake of Lions: she ingenuously replied, *that during that time her husband alwaies tempered the rigours and sharpnesses of her pains, with some drop of heavenly dew, which rendered them supportable: but the suffering, which I now desire, and which I entreat my Saviour to grant, is pure gall, the bottom of the cup, mixed with wormwood, myrrh, and vinegar, which he first drank on the Cross, abandoned by his Father, without the least consolation either from heaven or earth, either in his soul or in his body. And I trust, she added, that his goodness will bestow this favour upon me.* She might well say it: for our Lord had in an ecstasy she fell into in the beginning of this last sickness, given her assurances of it: and it hapned, as she had foretold.

68. Her inward pains and corporal griefs were redoubled with her patience, as well as all her other virtues, at the approach of her death. She rejected the delicate provisions, and other comforts, which are used, to be offered to the sick, sending them to the other Sisters, which were with her in the Infirmary. She said very often to this purpose, *that the religious both men*  
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and women should alwaies remember in their greatest sicknesses, the poverty and austerity, whereof they make profession, and endeavour to feel the effects of them.

69. She had such a care to preserve the virgin-purity of her body, that not being able to turn her self in her bed, she scarce would endure that those who attended should do her that office: and when she was near her death, she assured her Confessor, who hath since judicially made oath of it, that she never knew what was the sin of impurity, so much as in thought. She owed this singular grace to the mighty protection of the queen of Virgins, who in the time of those furious assaults the Devil made upon her, vested her with a veil whiter than snow, under which she promised her, that her purity should be covered from all sort of defilement.

70. That which makes death terrible to others, heightned her confidence in God. She comforted the Prioress and all the Nunns, who were weeping about her bed, begging pardon for the trouble and the ill example, which she had given them, and assuring them, that she would not forget them before God after her death: as in effect they experienced by the miraculous succours she procured them, of which the verbal processes at her canonization are an authentick proof.

71. She appeared not only to be without fear at the approach of death, but to be perfect mistress of her self by three evident proofs: the first, that having already received the holy Sacrament of extreme unction, the Confessor of the house had thoughts to visit the Fathers Hermites of *Mount Serrat* to recommend her to their prayers: but he durst not undertake it, fearing that he should not find her alive at his return. But the sick person told him with assurance, my father, do not be afraid to go: you shall find me alive three days hence.

72. The



72. The other was, that the Confessor standing near her bed to assist her in her last passage, she prayed him to retire, to take a little rest: for that without doubt he would find her alive the next morning. In the mean time her sickness augmenting to that height, that she could not speak, she made signs to the Nunns, who watched by her, to recite aloud the Apostles Creed. As they began to do it, she fell into an ecstasy, and you would have said, that she was already at the gates of Paradise, with assurance of entering there immediately. For she had a rapturous joy in her mind like that of the Prophet: *quoniam transibo in locum tabernaculi admirabilis, usque ad domum Dei: in voce exultationis & confessionis sonus epulandis.* I shall enter into the place of the admirable Tabernacle, even into the house of God, where they hear nothing but triumphant joy and thanksgiving, in the feast of his blessed eternity. Her speech came to her, and she spake things of the glory of the kingdom of God, and of the happiness which the Saints enjoy, which surpasses all created understanding and capacity. But this did not hinder her from giving at that very time marks of her profound humility: for the Confessor being returned in the morning, and having known what had passed, he asked what she thought of her condition, she answered simply, *my Father, I have always given up my self to the conduct of my Superiors, and in all my actions, I have set God before my eyes. This is that, which I can tell you.*

73. The third thing, which shews both her obedience, and the command, which this virtue had given her over death, was, that being in her agony, and the Hour of celebrating the conventual mass, where all the Nunns were to communicate for the sick person, being a good while past, the Confessor was in doubt, not knowing, whether he had best go and say Mass or re-

main with her. But noon drawing nigh, he resolved to do the former, and passing into the Sacristy, as he was putting on his chafuble to go to the Altar, they came running to him in great hast to acquaint him, that she was rendring up her soul. He replied without amazement, *go tell her from me, that she forbear to dye, till I have said Mass, and communicated the Nunns, and that I command her to be obedient now she is a dying, as she has been during the whole time of her life.* O miracle! o prodigy of obedience! what great reason had the holy Spirit to tell us in the holy scriptures, that *the obedient person will speak of victories.* In the very moment she heard the word, obedience, which several times in her life, had brought her out of her raptures, she returned from the gates of death, and raising her self very decently, pronounced these words aloud, *Benedictus Deus, blessed be God,* and continued her discourse, saying, *I give thee thanks, O my Lord, for that it hath pleased thee to leave me desolate to this hour; I am very content, that thou accomplish in me thy good pleasure: and I offer my self again to whatsoever thou shalt order concerning me.* Then she called for drink, and kept her soul upon the brink of her lips.

74. All the Convent being arrived with the Confessor after Mass, the Nunns disposed themselves to sing about her bed, and continued till about three of the clock, when she expired in the midst of that Quire of Virgins and of the holy Angels, who attended to present her to him, who had created her for his glory. Methinks it is fully evident, that as this holy religious soul had born and glorified God in her body and mind by the austerities of her life, and the pains as well inward as outward, which she had suffered, so after his example she ought to die out of obedience, to consummate, in the order of the divine predestination, this last hour in a perfect



perfect conformity to her divine crucified Jesus.

74. Her body lay upon a couch not any way gawly or mishapen, as a carcase usually is, but beautiful, as a precious relique of Paradise, exhaling a very agreeable odour, and filling those, who lookt upon it, with devotion. She died the 25th of *May* 1607. in the beginning of the 41st year of her age, and in the 25th of her entrance into a religious order.

76. God, who had honoured her in her life time with many great miracles, continued them after her death, that they might serve as irrefragable testimonies of the holiness of her life, and of the glory, which she now possesseth in heaven. I shall mention here but a very few, expecting a more large translation of her works, which will give a full account of those, which God hath wrought as well in her life time, as after her death.

77. The first and most considerable, in my judgment, because it is new and unheard of in Church-history, is that, which made a part of the decoration of St. *Peter's* Church at *Rome* at her canonization. The Saint understood painting and illuminating very well, and all manner of needle-work, and oftentimes employed her leisure time this way: the Nunns perceiving her in an ecstasy, her eyes lifted up toward heaven, or fixt upon a Crucifix, and that she did not leave off working, shut the windows, and drew her veil over her face: yet she continued still, and did it with that exactness, as if she had the free use of all her senses. We are assured, that they still keep at *Florence* several tables of painting, Corporals, and other like pieces, which she made in these ecstatical fits.

78. In the year 1587. in an ecstasy, which seized her, she took an image of the holy Virgin in the Oratory of the Novices, and went to the Infirmary, where Sister

*Faith of Bucci* was ready to die with horrid convulsions. The Saint after some prayers lifting up her eyes to heaven, made the sign of the Cross upon the sick Nunn, and said, *O my God, thy will be done* : and immediately the sick person was healed, and went about her ordinary employment.

79. About the year 1588. a cask of wine being spoiled in the Monastery, and they having no mony to buy better, the Mother-Prioreſs commanded Sister *Mary Magdalene* to provide for them in this their neceſſity. She obeyed, and going into the cellar, made the ſign of the Croſs upon the veſſel, and the wine immediately recovered its firſt goodneſs and taſt.

80. A Nunn then in the Infirmary, of whoſe recovery the Phyſicians deſpaired, deſired out of devotion to taſt this miraculous wine, and by an additional miracle, ſuddenly recovered her perfect health.

81. At another time ſhe healed two Nunns, whereof the firſt was a Leper, by licking her ears and head, which were the moſt infected, and the other was corroded by a cancer, by licking alſo her arm and hand where the diſtemper lay.

82. We might here relate among the miracles, which ſhe wrought in her life time, the many ſights, apparitions, and experiences ſhe had of ſeveral ſouls, either ſuffering in purgatory, or bleſſed in heaven, or caſt down and tormented in hell, but that we fear we ſhall be tedious : however I cannot omit two or three, which are very capable of edifying the reader very much.

In one of her firſt ecſtaſies, ſhe ſaw the ſoul of the bleſſed *Magdalene Baguezi*, a Nunn of the ſame Monastery, who died with the reputation of holineſs, raiſed upon a throne of glory, ſurrounded with lights, and enriched with a thouſand rich and beautiful jewels : and  
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it was declared to her, that she had built that throne by the excellence of her purity, and that those pretious stones were the souls, which she had gained to God, and conducted in the way of virtue.

83. Another time she saw the soul of one of the Nunns of her Convent, mount into heaven, accompanied with her Guardian Angel, and St. *Miniat*, to whom she bare a singular devotion. And it had been revealed to her, that she had been detained in purgatory, 1. For that she had workt on Festival days, some little space of time, without necessity. 2. For that she had neglected to acquaint her superior with some disorders, which passed in the house. 3. For that she had loved her parents excessively and too passionately.

84. She had knowledge, in one of her revelations, of the glory, which the blessed *Lewis de Gonzaga* a Jesuite enjoyed in heaven, and her deposition, taken according to law, was instrumental to his beatification. Seeing one day the soul of one of her brothers miserably tormented in the flames of purgatory, she cryed out, *O miserable, but happy! O soul afflicted, but glorious! Ah! how dreadful are those pains, and who can conceive them! O God, after this sight, who would live any longer upon earth?* Having then made use of her prayers and penances for his deliverance, he appeared to her glorious, and acquainted her with the particular torments every sin is punished with in that place.

85. As to what concerns the miracles wrought after her death, the bull of her canonization begins, not without great reason, with that incorruption and good odour of her body, which continues to this day.

86. Then when her Virgin-body was after her death exposed in the Church, there was a concourse of people of all ages, sexes and qualities to see it, touch it, and pay.

pay a veneration to it. Among others, a young man of an irregular and licentious life, advanced toward the body to touch it. The Saint, as if she had been alive, had a horror of that dunghil, and turned her head on the other side. This action touched the young man so to the quick with a sharp sense of his past life, that he made a firm resolution to amend. This miracle was attested by a reverend Jesuite, who was an eye-witness of it; with many others.

87. The charity, which had so urged her in her life time to help her Sisters in their wants, continued after her death. In the year 1654. they had no oyl in the Monastery; the Nunns, not being able to get any elsewhere, had recourse to their good and charitable Mother, who had succoured them once before in the year 1626. upon a like accident. They placed her image upon the vessel, where there was but a little left, and immediately the oyl was so abundantly multiplied, that it continued, till they could make or get new, which was more than three months after.

88. I conclude (O noble and incomparable daughter of the great Prophets, *Elias* and *Elisha*, the first founders of the order, in the which you have been so advantageously sanctified) with the miracle of the oyl multiplied, in the which they have gone before you, both the one and the other, conjuring you to continue it, not only corporally upon the bodies, but spiritually upon the hearts of all those, who have the happiness to wear the same habit, as you did. You are one of those wise and prudent Virgins, whose lamp never wanted the oyl, which St. *Augustine*, one of the Saints which you most honoured upon earth, called eternal, which flows from that intimate love you have for God. Give us of this oyl, causing by your powerful intercessions, that our  
lamps



lamps may never be empty of it, that we may be received after you to the marriage of the lamb, and there to sing with you the song of his eternal love. This is the favour, which I desire of you, in recompence of the small pains, which I have taken, to make known to the world the miracles of your holiness and virtues, with which it pleased God to honour your.

*Live Jesus and Mary.*

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## *Prayers to Saint Mary Magdalene of Pazzi.*

*Taken from the first Vespers of her Canonical  
Office.*

### *Chapter.*

**Q**UI gloriatur, in Domino gloriatur : non enim qui  
seipsum commendat, ille probatus est : sed quem  
Deus commendat.

R. Regnum mundi, & omnem ornatum sæculi con-  
tempni, propter amorem Domini mei Iesu Christi.

Quem vidi, quem amavi, in quem credidi, quem  
dilexi.

V. Eructavit cor meum verbum bonum, dico ego  
opera mea regi.

Quem vidi, quem amavi, in quem credidi, quem di-  
lexi.

Gloria Patri, & Filio, & Spiritui Sancto.

Quem vidi, quem amavi, in quem credidi, quem di-  
lexi.

### *Hymne.*

**H**Ujus obtentu, Deus alme nostris.  
Parce jam culpis vitia remittens :  
Quò tibi puri resonemus alnum  
Pectoris hymnum.

Gloria Patri, genitæque Proli,  
Et tibi compar utriusque semper,

*Spiritus*



Spiritus alme, Deus unus omni

Tempore secli. Amen.

V. Diffusa est gratia in labiis tuis.

R. Propterea benedixit te Deus in æternum.

*Anthem.*

Accinxit fortitudine lumbus suos, & roboravit brachium suum : ideóque lucerna ejus non extinguetur in sempiternum.

**M**agnificat anima mea Dominum.

Et exultavit spiritus meus, in Deo salutari meo.

Quia respexit humilitatem ancillæ suæ : ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes.

Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est : & sanctum nomen ejus.

Et misericordia ejus à progenie in progenies timentibus eum.

Fecit potentiam in brachio suo : dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.

Deposuit potentes de sede : & exaltavit humiles.

Esurientes implevit bonis : & divites dimisit inanes.

Suscepit Israël puerum suum, recordatus misericordiæ suæ.

Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros : Abraham & semini ejus in sæcula.

Gloria Patri, & Filio, & Spiritui Sancto.

Sicut erat in Principio & nunc & semper : & in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

*Anthem.*

Accinxit fortitudine lumbos suos, & roboravit brachium suum : ideóque lucerna ejus non extinguetur in sempiternum.

M

| Prayer.

*Prayer.*

**E**Xaudi nos, Deus salutaris noster : ut sicut de beatæ Mariæ Magdalenæ, virginis tuæ, festivitate gaudeamus, ita piæ devotionis erudiamur affectu. Per Dominum nostrum, &c.

*Another Hymne at the Lauds by Saint Ambrose.*

**I**esu Corona Virginum,  
 Quem mater illa concipit,  
 Quæ sola Virgo parturit,  
 Hæc vota clemens accipe.  
 Qui pascis inter lilia,  
 Septus choreis Virginum,  
 Sponsas decorans gloria,  
 Sponsisque reddens præmia.  
 Quocunque pergis, Virgines  
 Sequuntur, atque laudibus  
 Post te canentes cursitant,  
 Hymnósque dulces personant.  
 Te deprecamur largiùs,  
 Nostris adauge sensibus ;  
 Nescire prorsus omnia  
 Corruptionis vulnera.  
 Deo Patri sit gloria,  
 Ejusque soli Filio,  
 Cum Spiritu Paraclito,  
 Et nunc & in perpetuum. Amen.

V. Elegit eam Deus, & prælegit eam.

R. Et habitare eam facit in tabernaculo suo.



*Anthem.*

Simile est regnum cælorum sagenæ missæ in mare, & ex omni genere piscium congreganti: quam cum impleta esset, educentes, & secus littus sedentes, elegerunt bonos in vasa sua, malos autem foras milerunt.

*Prayer.*

**E**Xaudi nos, Deus salutaris noster: ut sicut de beatæ Mariæ Magdalenæ, virginis tuæ festivitate gaudeamus, ita piæ devotionis erudiamur affectu. Per Dominum nostrum, &c.

*Prayer for the Church.**Oremus.*

**E**Cclesiæ tuæ, quæsumus Domine, preces placatus admitte: ut destructis adversitatibus & erroribus universis, secura tibi serviat libertate. Per Christum, &c.

*For our holy Father the Pope.**Oremus.*

**D**Eus omnium fidelium Pastor & rector, famulum tuum Clementem, quem Pastorem Ecclesiæ tuæ præesse voluisti, propitius respice: da ei quæsumus, verbo & exemplo, quibus præest, proficere: ut ad vitam, unâ cum grege sibi credito perveniat sempiternam. Per Christum, &c.

*For the King.*

Oremus.

**Q**uæsumus omnipotens Deus, ut famulus tuus Ludovicus. Rex noster, qui tua miseratione suscepit regni gubernacula, virtutum etiam omnium percipiat incrementa, quibus decenter ornatus, & vitiorum monstra devitare, hostes superare, & ad te, qui via, veritas, & vita es, gratiofus valeat pervenire. Per Christum, &c.

**F I N I S.**

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**A P P R O B A T I O N.**

*I have read the Book of the Life of St. Mary Magdalene of Pazzi Carmelite.*

GRANDIN.

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**P E R M I S S I O N.**

*It is permitted to print a Book entitled, the Life of St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi Carmelite.*

De la Reynie



*A brief discourse about 'discerning and trying the Spirits, whether they be of God.*

**T**Here is imprinted by the hand of nature in the mind of every man, so great, just, and becoming a respect and reverence to whatever bears the stamp and character of divine authority and revelation, that nothing can be proposed under that pretense and notion, if it be fully made out and justified by such proofs, as may satisfy our inquisitive reason, but what ought to be received and embraced by us with the same firmness and readiness of assent, as the plainest and most obvious truths of nature, and the general and uncontradicted Theoremes of Geometry. For who can, or dare, either mistrust or disbelieve God, or harbour such evil and dishonourable thoughts of the infinite rectitude and perfection of his wisdom and goodness, as to suspect the truth of what he is pleased to reveal, dictate, and affirm?

Upon the strength of this universally acknowledged and received Principle, cunning and designing men in all ages have proceeded to set up for authors of new sects and opinions, and have prevailed with a mighty success upon their unwary proselytes, by imposing upon them phantasies and dreams of folly, and plausible, and sometimes scarce plausible stories and fables for divine suggestions and inspirations. And indeed the weakness, the vanity, the folly of humane understanding is seen in no one thing more, than in suffering it self to be wrought upon,

upon, and deluded by such kind of tricks and slights, without examining the reasons and grounds of the several pretensions, which usurp so venerable a name, with that calmness of discretion and sobriety of reason, which a matter of so great moment may justly challenge.

The want of this has let so much error and superstition into the world, has produced those absurd tenents, and irrational opinions, and contrary professions of religion, that are maintained at this day with great heat and violence of passion, and with invincible obstinacy, and has excluded truth, tho' it comes recommended with the plainness, with the evidence, and with the convincingness of a demonstration. These are the usual effects of an overhasty and inconsiderate credulity, and of a rash and unadvised assent, which render the weak and the injudicious obnoxious to the fraud and artifice of every Impostor and bold Pretender.

One would think it scarce possible, that in the first times of the Gospel, and so soon after the ascension of our blessed Saviour into heaven, when the Apostles were yet in being, upon whom the Spirit of God was poured down in so extraordinary a manner, and who were filled with miraculous gifts and graces, which raised a just astonishment in all, who heard and saw them, and sufficiently proved their commission to be from heaven, and that they were influenced and guided and directed by an unerring spirit, others should rise up and contradict their doctrine, and pretend to the same infallible spirit, with all the confidence and assurance of inspired men: but that we know, not only how active the Devil was and is, and how concerned to check and hinder the growth and spreading of the Christian doctrine, by pretending to the same methods, by which it was first propagated; to oppose revelation to revelation; and to have  
his



his emissaries to counterfeit the seal of the Spirit of God, to make their false doctrine pass current, and thereby deceive with the greater success and ease: but also, how men of corrupt minds, either out of envy or malice, or out of a love of popularity, or out of mad and impious zeal for their novel opinions, or out of a desire of innovation and drawing followers after them, or to serve other base ends and purposes, have been and are willing to deceive themselves and others with such pretensions, and with shews of religion and piety, as if all this while they were doing God's work, and serving him, and not themselves, and gratifying their own lusts, humors, and phantasies.

To prevent and obviate these great and fatal mischiefs, which too too often arise from a hasty belief of such pretenders to inspiration, Saint *John*, who lived the longest of all the Apostles to see the sad and evil effects of such designs, and how the venom had diffused it self every where, and was ready to seize and infect the vitals of Christianity, puts those to whom he writes in mind, that is, the Christians of that age in general, (for the title, which is in some copies prefixed to his first epistle, *ad Parthos*, is not antienter than the times of St. (a) Augustine) that (b) they believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, that is, that they be not over-credulous, but weigh and examine things with a severe, with a sober, with an impartial judgment, and admit of no doctrine as revealed from God, of no inspiration, as from the spirit of truth, till they had tryed them by the just rules and measures of prudence, *whether they be of God or no*. For at that time especially, such pretensions were very rife and frequent: (c) many false prophets, says he, are gone out into the world, that is, many false teachers abound every where, and disguise their absurd, their heretical, their

(a) *Question. Evangel. l. 2. quest. 39.*

(b) *St. Joh. 4. 1.*

(c) See also *Ezek. 13. 2.*

*3. & 22. ch.*

*28. Jer. 29.*

*9. St. Mat.*

*24. 24.*

their blasphemous doctrines and opinions with the specious name and title of divine revelation.

Now to prevent all error and imposture, as much as is possible in these times of dangerous temptation, when so many subtil deceivers are abroad, and appear with open face, and use their methods and artifices to unsettle the minds of the less wary and unlearned, and bring them off from the profession of the true Christian doctrine, as it is taught and maintained in the Catholick and Apostolick Church of *England*, by law established, to their several parties and persuasions: I will lay down several *νεῖμερα*, or marks and characteristicks, by which we may justly and certainly try and examine *whether the spirits be of God*, and by unerring rules distinguish a true inspiration and revelation from a pretended and counterfeit one, discern the *spirit of God* from that of *Antichrist*, 1 *St. John* 4. 3. and that of the world, 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. the *spirit of truth* from the *spirit of error*, 1 *St. John* 4. v. 6. the illapses and inspirations of the holy Spirit of God from the illusions, instincts, and suggestions of the unclean spirit, from natural and fanatical enthusiasm, from the swellings and vapors of a diseased spleen and heated melancholy, and from the extravagant roving of a distempered imagination. Rules, that will hold in all ages and countreys, and are as justly applicable to the present condition and state of *Christendom*, and will continue so to the end of the world, as they were to those first times: it being the same religion, which we of this Church profess, which was revealed by *Christ*, and first published by his Apostles at *Jerusalem*, and propagated by them through all the parts of the then known world, from *Britain* as far as *India*, they being furnisht upon the day of *Pentecost*, with such a variety of languages, as if each had had with fame in the Poet  
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an hundred tongues, to proclaim to every nation in their own dialect the will of God, and the mysteries of our redemption: the same doctrine of faith is continued down to us, which was at first delivered: (d) *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* The religion of our B. Saviour is fixt and unalterable, and admits of no variation and change in the necessary and essential parts and branches of it. (d) Heb. 13. 8.

This inquisition is highly necessary upon the accompt of the truth and certainty of this Apostolical supposition, that *all spirits are not of God*, that is, all who pretend and give out, that they are inspired, are not divinely inspired. I shall therefore lay this down in general, as a just *postulatum*, and preliminary to the following discourse, that as the Spirit of God is the fountain and original of all divine revelation and truth, and that as the Prophets and (e) *other holy men of God spake as they were moved by the holy Ghost*: so in several cases, transports, and ecstatical affections, elevated thoughts and expressions, and raptures, and deliquiums, and a mighty seeming confidence, and extraordinary zeal, with actions and behaviour above the usual methods of nature, and the common custom and practice, which are mistaken for divine inspiration, are oftentimes (e) 2 St. Pet. 1. 21.

1. The effects of temper and constitution, when the bloud and the other humors of the body by an undue ferment, and the animal spirits by some infection and taint, or by an over-rapid motion, disorder the brain, and fill the imagination with extravagant phansies and ideas of things: and how foolish, and weak, and ecstatical the persons become, who give up themselves to this roving faculty, especially when it is indulged to in all its heights and excesses, thousands of instances shew. They are then any thing but themselves; and thô the phantastick humor

mor does not work equally in all, and several may seem to retain some shews of reason, yet it will appear, if we narrowly watch and observe them, that they are under the delusion of a wild and ungoverned phanſy, notwithstanding that in other things, separated from this pretense, they may be sober and wise enough; nay and it may be good men and women too; as we may justly believe several to have been, who have been influenced too much by the fumes of heated melancholy; which is

2. Another natural principle of pretended inspiration: and how this humor does work up into the brain, and intoxicate the mind, and according as it is mixed with a greater or lesser dose of blood, and heightened by complexion, natural inclination, or a diseased spleen, or by a peculiar way and course of life, whether sedentary and private, or more free and active, and the like, and what a great and mixt variety of effects it produceth, which are to be seen in persons pretending to inspiration, no curious, inquisitive, and understanding person can be ignorant of: and indeed the cases are so many and so well known, that I need not descend to instance in the several particulars. Hypochondriacal passions alienate the mind from it self, and have a natural tendency to make those, who are vexed and distempered with them, enthusiastical and mad.

Add to the force and vigour of a deluded imagination, and to the distemper of blood and ill constitution of body,

3. The evil instincts and suggestions of the Devil, who often enters into the Enthusiast, and gets entire possession of his imagination, and fills the mind with pride and conceit: and the evil spirit at last shews himself to have hurried him on all this while, tho' not so openly, as when he utters his blasphemies and his most absurd and irrational tenents for revelation, and is tempted to violate the laws of nature, reason, common civility and decency,



cency, and makes it lawful for others so to do.

This being premised, in order to our better guidance and direction in the proposed research, I will consider these three particulars.

1. The nature and subject matter of pretended revelations.

2. Their designs and tendencies, with the several effects and influences; whether good or bad, which they have upon religion, manners, and civil life.

3. The different manner of the operation of the Spirit of God from that of the evil and lying spirit, or of ordinary nature, heightened either by phanſy or diſtemper.

1. I will examine the nature and subject matter of pretended revelations: and what I have to ſay upon this Topick, ſhall be comprehended under theſe four propoſitions.

1 Proposition. Whatever pretended revelation (f) does thwart and contradict the eſtabliſt doctrine of *Chriſt* and his Apoſtles, or does any way oppugn and overthrow the fundamental and eſſential articles of the Chriſtian faith, cannot be of

(f) *Hieronymus* epistolâ 54. ad Marcellam adverſus *Montanum*. Sciant à nobis non tam prophetiam repelli, quæ Domini ſignata eſt paſſione, quam eos non recipi, qui cum ſcripturæ veteris & novæ auctoritate non congruant.

God. The reaſon and argument, on which the truth of this propoſition is founded, is plain and obvious to every ones underſtanding, and is infallibly certain; becauſe God cannot be ſuppoſed to contradict himſelf by contradicting revelations. For as *he, that believeth not the record, that God gave of his Son, believes not God, and confequently makes him a liar*, as *St. John* argues, 1 epiſt. 4. 10. ſo much more he does this, who invents a new doctrine as from God, contrary to what he has been pleaſed to reveal and atteſt. This rule of judging of the truth or falſhood of a pretended revelation from the matter of it, is made uſe of by the ſame Apoſtle in the 2 and 3 verſes

of that chapter : ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκετε, hereby know ye, or ye know, whether indicatively or imperatively, or as an old Greek exemplar in Oxford has it, γινώσκεται is known the Spirit of God : every spirit, that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God : and every spirit, that confesseth not, that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God, and (or but) is that spirit of Antichrist.

A truly inspired person preacheth and acknowledgeth the great mystery of our B. Saviour's incarnation, and all the other doctrines depending upon it: for instance, that he is the eternal Son of God, the true Messias, that was foretold so many ages before should come into the world, and appear in a human body, and with all the essentials of our nature, and expiate and put away sin by the sacrifice of himself upon the Cross, and that he is the Saviour of mankind. For that all this is necessarily understood, is clear from the 15th verse, *whosoever shall confess, that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God*: there being no just pretension at all to any communion with God, or revelation from his Spirit, without an explicit, full, and positive confession and acknowledgment of these truths.

The reason, why St. *John* does instance particularly in the confessing or not confessing *Christ* to have come in the flesh, as the mark and proof either of true or false doctrine, is plainly this. Heresies then began to spread and advance themselves concerning the person and natures of our B. Saviour, under a pretence of a *δεινότερα γνῶσις*, or more divine knowledge and illumination : and among others, especially these two.

1. That Christ was not really and truly born, and did not truly and really suffer, but that all was done *putative*, or ἐν δόξει, in appearance and shew only, as if his body had been only a meer phantôme made up of air, and some other



other crucified in his stead. This was the new discovery of the *Gnosticks*, the spawn of *Simon the Sorcerer*, who gratifying the corrupt inclinations of nature, by their licentious doctrines, more easily gained credit and reputation to their absurd and blasphemous phantasies among their blind and ignorant followers. This is that *spirit of Antichrist*, which St. *John* does chiefly refer to and condemn: and after him St. *Ignatius* every where in his Epistles, and especially in that *ad Trallianos*:

and (g) St. *Polycarpus* in his epistle to the *Philippians*, where he has given us an excellent paraphrase and explication of the words of his blessed Master, *whosoever does not confess, that Jesus Christ is come in*

(g) S. Polycarpus epist. ad Philippenses; πᾶς γὰρ ὃς ἂν μὴ ὁμολογῇ Ἰησοῦν χριστὸν ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθέναι, ἀνίσταται ὡς εἰς τὸ ὅς ἂν μὴ ὁμολογῇ τὸ μαρτύριον τοῦ σταυροῦ, ἐκ τῆς διαβόλου ὄψης.

*the flesh, is Antichrist, and whosoever does not confess τὸ μαρτύριον τοῦ σταυροῦ, the testimony or suffering of the Cross, is of the Devil.* The same gross and impious opinion was

taken up from them by (a) *Saturnilus*, (b) *Basilides*, (c) *Valentinus*, (d) *Marcion*, and their ungodly sect, who are therefore called by the *Greek Writers*, who confuted them, *Δοκηταί* and *Φαντασισταί*, and by the *Manichees*, called hence also by *Vincentius Livinensis* in the 20th chapter of his *Commonitorium*, *Phantasiae predicatorum*. But besides this,

(a) Epiphan. hæres. 23. n. 1. (b) Hær. 24. n. 3, 4. (c) V. Athanasii epist. ad Adelph. pag. 156. (d) V. Tertulliani lib. 3. adv. Marcionem, p. 483. ex editione Rigaltii.

2. The *Gnosticks* in those first times started another blasphemous opinion concerning *Christ*, and maintained, that *Jesus* was distinct from *Christ*, and wholly different from the Son of God; as did also (i) *Cerintus* and (k) *Ebion*, as *Epiphanius* shews at large, and *Marcion*, against whom *Tertullian* in his book *de carne Christi* quotes 1 St. *John* 4. chap. 3. v. and adds, *definient ipsum Christum unum, multiformis Christi argumentatores quatit, qui alium faciunt Christum, alium Iesum.* For this impious assertion

(i) Hæres. 28. n. 1. (k) Hæres. 30. n. 3. 14. 16.

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it is, that St. John brands them with the characters of *lyars and Antichrists*, 1 ep. 2. 22. *who is a lyar, but he that denyeth, that Jesus is the Christ? He is Antichrist, that denyeth the Father and the Son.* Against these, who did *comminuere & per multa dividere filium Dei*, St. Irenæus excellently disputeth in his third book 18 chap. *adv. hæreses*, citing these verses of the Apostle, but reading the third verse somewhat different from what we find in our ordinary copies, *omnis spiritus, qui solvit Jesum Christum, non est ex Deo, sed ex Antichristo est*, as does the *Vulgar Latine*, *omnis spiritus, qui solvit Jesum, ex Deo non est*, undoubtedly in his Greek copy, παν πνεῦμα ὃ λέει, οὐ ὁ καὶ ἀλέει τ

(l) Socrat.  
Scholast.  
hist. Eccles.  
lib. 7. c. 32.

*Ἰησοῦ*, which (l) *Socrates Scholasticus* contends to have been found ἐν τοῖς παλαιαῖς Ἀπὸστολικοῖς, in the antient *Exemplars*, and that it was razed out by those, who through heretical pravity endeavoured to separate the divinity from the humanity of our B. Saviour; as did afterward *Nestorius*, against whom it is cited and brought by the said Historian, and very frequently by St. Leo, according to this reading, which passed current in his time, as in his 24th epistle to *Flavianus* Bishop of *Constantinople*, chap. 5. (m) and in several others, which he thus explains, *quid autem est solvere Jesum, nisi humanam ab eo separare naturam, & sacramentum, per quod unum salvati sumus, impudentissimis evacuare figmentis? caligans vero circa naturam corporis Christi, necesse est, ut etiam in passione ejus eadem obstinatione desipiat.*

(m) S. Leo  
epist. 57.  
pag. 549. &  
epist. 133.  
p. 696. ex  
editione  
doctissimi  
Quenelli.

And the same is to be said of the other articles of the Christian faith, as the adorable mystery of the undivided Trinity, the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father, the personality and godhead of the holy Ghost, Christ's making a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world by the blood of the Cross, the resurrection of the body at the last



last day, that upon its reunion with the soul, it may constitute the very self same numerical persons, that before lived upon earth, and the like : the Apostles having delivered these doctrines in plain, clear, and easie expressions, without any affectation or obscurity, without the lights and colours of speech, and the studied arts of plausible and designing eloquence, not *with wisdom of words*, lest the Cross of Christ should be of no effect, but by the foolishness of preaching, which yet mortified and confounded the pride and arrogance of the Philosophers, and baffled and shewed the folly of the wisdom of this world, nor *with enticing words of mans wisdom*, but in demonstration of the spirit and power, that is, by those mighty gifts, wherewith they were endued by the Spirit of God, and the ready assistance of the divine power, which sufficiently shewed it self in those numerous miracles, which were daily wrought by them, and their authority being thus clearly made out and demonstrated, as whatever they delivered from God and Christ, could not be rejected without the guilt of obstinacy and unjust and unreasonable infidelity : so whatever doctrine contradicts those declarations upon any pretense whatever, whether of new revelation, or of more close, subtil, and refined reason, must necessarily be false, and consequently not of God.

And certainly this should be enough, if nothing else could be said, to cast an eternal reproach upon the doctrine of the two Socini, which, considered as a system, and as methodized by them, and drest and trickt up by their followers (for as to several scattered parts and branches of their blasphemy, they had been long before maintained by Artemon, Paulus Samosatenus, and Photinus) is wholly new and unheard of, and is repugnant to the plain, literal, and univocal expressions of the scripture : which is such a just prejudice against it, that no art, no subtilty,

subtilty, not all the philosophy and reason of mankind, can ever take off and satisfy. I shall not now enquire into the grounds of the complex heresy of the *Socinians*, nor shew the sophistry of them, which might be done without denying the use of right and sober reason in matters of religion. Faith is an act of the rational understanding, and we have the highest, the justest reason to believe what we believe: but withal our reason is sufficiently convinced by a reflexion on its weaknesses and imperfections, that there are several things in matters of ordinary speculation, that cannot be comprehended by it: much more will this hold in matters of an infinite nature, such as relate to the divine essence, and the mysteries of the holy Trinity, and the union of the divine and humane nature in the person of Christ.

But to allege this in a plain matter of sense, to which our faculties are every way proportionate, and in defence of a doctrine, as is that of Transubstantiation, which for several ages was never acknowledged at all, much less believed as an article of faith, and which involveth in it several real and manifest contradictions, and overthroweth the certain judgment of sense, the collections of reason, the principles of Mathematicks and Philosophy, and the experience of all mankind, is such a gross imposition upon the faculties and consciences of rational creatures, that one would first wonder, how such an absurd, irrational, and impossible notion should ever prevail, and then that any should have the immodesty to defend it; but that we know, (1.) how it was first introduced and brought into the world, in order to the establishment of a gross error about the worship of images, and nursed up afterwards in times of ignorance and superstition, to advance secular designs; and that (2.) many of the *Roman* communion privately disown it, and in their hearts wish  
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that it had never been confirmed and decreed an article of faith, as it was first at the Council of *Lateran*, or rather by Pope *Innocent* the third, who are put to their shifts to maintain it, that otherwise they might not seem to fall into heresy, by questioning or disbelieving the modern grand fundamental principle of the *Roman Church*, their pretended infallibility. But to return to the express doctrine of the Christian religion, clearly revealed in the writings of the new Testament: if, as we may well suppose, the creatures, which are below us, being of a different species, cannot understand the reasons of our actions, which are done with judgment and design, if they cannot dive into our councils, and examine their strength and solidity; if an emmet, for instance, or a worm cannot comprehend a piece of art, as the contrivance and mechanism of a watch, or the use of a sector, or quadrant, much less an intricate problem of *Archimedes*, or *Pappus*, or any such curious Mathematical speculation, because life, and motion, and sense are not suitable faculties, and even reason it self is insufficient, without institution and improvement, and the assistance of art, care, and study: if there be lastly such a vast difference among men upon the account of natural parts, as wit, quickness of apprehension, memory, judgment, and especially when advanced by education, serious study, meditation, a wise choice of company, travel, and all other ways of perfecting humane reason, as if they were not of the same kind; it is an intolerable presumption, and the effect of pride and conceitedness to think, that our shallow reason should be able to comprehend the things of God, the disproportion between God and our faculties being altogether infinite. Let us keep to this infallible rule, the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour and his Apostles, and remember, that whatever contradicts that,

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that, and goes about to overthrow it, cannot be of God.

2 Proposition. Whatever doctrine or revelation does undermine the foundation, upon which the truth of the *Christian* religion was at first establisht, the resurrection of our blessed Saviour, and renders that and the great miracles of his life uncertain and questionable, whether they were really performed or no, and makes way for skepticism and infidelity, cannot be of God. But such is the portentous doctrine of Transubstantiation. For what other proof and demonstration have we of the truth of *Christ's* resurrection, but the testimony of the Apostles, that saw him, and conversed with him, after that he arose from the dead, who had no other assurance, but what their senses gave them? to which our B. Saviour appeals, to put them out of a possibility of doubting, *St. Luke 24. 39. St. John 20. 27.* But supposing Transubstantiation to be true, that what our senses assure us to be bread, and has all the qualities of it, (a consecrated wafer being the same in substance as well as quality with, and no way to be distinguished from an unconsecrated one, by the most cunning Priests, who pretend to this omnipotent transforming power, of *creating their Creator*, if laid together) is not bread, and that the entire body of *Christ*, which was born of the *V. Mary*, and was crucified, and ascended into Heaven, where it remains glorified, with all its essential properties, and amplitude and extension of parts, should be produced and annihilated ten thousand times every day in the year, and be included and contained in the least crum of a wafer: (for that being broken into a thousand particles, it seems, is multiplied into so many wholes, which tho distinct and separate in place, shall be but one and the same body; tho each is the real body of *Christ*, according to the Council of *Trent*, which is thus actually divided from it self) not to



to mention the other many gross absurdities, which flow from the unnatural sense of the words of the institution, what just, what proper, what satisfactory answer can the defenders of it make to the objections and blasphemies of the Heathen, and particularly of the wretch (*n*) *Spinoza*, who asserts, that the Apostles and Evangelists were mistaken and deceived, and that the resurrection of Christ was not real, and that all was meer phanfy and apparition. For there is the same assurance and evidence, that what we receive in the holy Eucharist are, as to their natural substance, bread and wine, as that *Christ's* body after his resurrection, which they beheld with their eyes, and which they touched with their hands, was animated, and consisted of flesh and bones: for the proof of which they had the clear, and just, and proper evidence of their senses, which yet, if Transubstantiation be true, nay be so much as possible, cannot be a firm foundation of faith. Now God out of his infinite wisdom and goodness having thought fit to satisfy the doubts and curiosities of the most inquisitive, as to the truth of the religion, which *Christ* the true Messiah has instituted, by his resurrection from the dead, and by the several other stupendious miracles done by him and his Apostles, and hereby as by a manifest and demonstrative ground and motive of credibility, work faith in their minds, it cannot be supposed, that this or any other doctrine should be from God, which overthrows the most powerful and convincing methods of his wisdom and goodness, that he was pleased to make use of, as a demonstration of his divine will and pleasure, in the first establishment of *Christianity*: this absurd fiction being such a prejudice against the belief and admission of it, as will render its whole frame and constitution very liable to be questioned by Jews, and Heathens, and Skepticks, and Atheists.

(*m*) V. Spinoza opera posthuma, epist. 23. ad D. Oldenburgium, p. 454. & epist. 25. p. 458.

3 Proposition Whatever revelation or doctrine pretends to gratifie corrupted nature, or introduce a licentious course of life, and favour the least immorality, cannot be from God : because such a revelation is repugnant to God's essential purity and holiness, and to the revelations of his will already made, and cannot without the highest dishonour be imputed to him. The common notices of nature teach us, that there is a turpitude in some actions, antecedent to all laws, and so owing its being such to the eternal differences, that are between good and evil, and which no practice, no example, not length of time, nor the continued prevailing power of custom can ever justifie, but will alwaies stand condemned by free and unoppressed reason, their nature being unchangeable ; that we are to live up to the dignity of our nature, and obey the laws of our creation, and the laws of morality, and do nothing unworthy our rational faculties, but be just, and sober, and chaste, and lay restraints upon all the excesses of passion, and indulge not to the least sensuality, which degrades us from the state and condition, in which God has placed us. And indeed God himself is so concerned for the honour of his holiness, and that nothing dishonourable & unworthy of him be imposed upon the world under the pretense of his authority, that he in such a case dispenses with us, and frees us from believing signs and wonders, and requires us to be just and true to the collections of our reason, and the declarations of his will already made known. Thus we read *Deut. 13. 1, 2, 3.* *if any prophet or dreamer of dreams*, any pretender to revelation should tempt to idolatry, and to justifie his pretension, should be permitted to do some wonderful and extraordinary thing, they were not to hearken to him : because this pretense is founded upon an irrational supposition, that God should allow and perswade to any action,



action, which tends to his dishonour, and lay a necessity upon us to obey him, and yet at the same time lay a necessity upon us also not to obey him.

The great purity and strictness of the *Christian* religion adds a very ample confirmation to the truth of it, and perchance brought over as many Profelytes, as miracles, and wrought a mighty conviction upon the minds of men, that such a consummate doctrine of piety, that gives laws to the thoughts and the wandring enclinations of nature, that requires purity of mind and intention, and takes it off from all sensual and earthly things, that stirs us up to imitate God in all his imitable perfectious, and has introduced such a pure and holy worship of God, as is fit for him to require, and for rational creatures to bestow, must proceed and be from God. But alas! to the great shame of humane nature as well as of religion, the *Gnosticks* and the other villainous sects in the midst of all their high-flown pretensions to divine inspiration, allowed themselves the practice of the most execrable impieties, as if they had been let loose from all laws of modesty and shame, and were obliged, as an exercise of their religion, to indulge to the furious extravagancies of pampered lust. If the religion of *Mahomet* were not made up of ridiculous absurdities, and gross contradictions, and idle tales, and impossible fictions, without any connexion and sense, or the least support of common reason or ordinary prudence, unless where it retains the principles of natural religion, yet the looseness of its rules, which give nature its full sway, and gratifie the carnal appetite in all its wandrings, and make no provision for the government of the passions, and the purity of the mind, and indeed are nothing else but a provocative to lust, and an institution of brutality, is enough to satisfy any considering person, that they

they are not the inspirations of God or the Angel *Gabriel*, but the suggestions of an evil spirit, speaking through the mouth of a diseased and mad Enthusiast. But we see, what uncultivated ignorance, gross stupidity, and fatal prejudice can do in so large and flourishing a part of the world, which is given up by the just judgment of God to believe the lyes and dotages of a vile Impostor, who have no other argument for their persuasion, but the success of their arms for so many ages: but how the *Christians* of those times should be debauched and brought over to embrace so impure and irrational a doctrine, might be matter of just admiration, but that we know their ill lives, and the horrid factions in religion had distracted their understandings, and weakened their judgments, and heresy, especially the *Arian*, which had infected almost the whole *Eastern* Empire, had corrupted the articles of the Christian faith, and made them too liable and obnoxious to the impressions and artifices of every subtil and cheating pretender. And what horrid doctrine, corruptive of honesty and morality, was vented in the last age by several vile and ungodly men, under the pretense of being divinely inspired, such as *David George, Munroer, John of Leyden, Matthews, and Knipperdoling*, may be seen in *Sleidan*, and the other Historians of that time. They seemed to be above the ordinary rules of life, by which the civilized part of mankind is governed, and under no obligation of the laws of *Christ*, observed in all *Christian* governments throughout the world, gratifying their wild and lustful inclinations with the multiplicity of wives. This consideration certainly ought to have awakened \* another poor deluded man out of his dreams of folly, into which his vain credulity, and most unlawful curiosity had cast him, that those spirits, with which he had so long conversed,

{ D. Cu.



versed, and who pretended to discover to him the will of God in fuller measures than it had been yet known, and the mysteries of nature, to gratifie his Mathematical genius, and the great events and revolutions, that should soon after be brought about, were not good Angels sent from God, as by other manifest signs and indications, so by this especially, when they commanded him and his companion to have their wives in common, but that he was under a strong and fatal infatuation, and out of an immoderate desire of knowledge, had lost all sober and right use of his reason, and was besotted in his imagination.

The like evil spirit has acted several here in *England*: that the infection, which came out of *Germany*, did not spread far at that time, was owing to the strictness and severity of the government, and to the great care of the Bishops, both in Queen *Elizabeth's* time, and in the reigns of the two next succeeding *Monarchs*: but when once the great rebellion began in the year 41. and the Liturgy was voted down, and Episcopacy abolished, and the discipline of the Church, and the most decent, most regular, and most pious service of it removed, under which it had so long and so happily flourished, against all the assaults of *Roman* bigotry and superstition on the one hand, and of mad fanatical rage and enthusiasm on the other, all sorts of damnable, blasphemous, and absurd tenents were openly maintained under the guise of divine illumination: a collection of which you have in the *Gangrena*: and in a suitable compliance with such kind of persuasions, a liberty of living as one lists was not only indulged, but practised, and the laws of common civility and honesty were disavowed and violated, without the least horror, regret, and shame, I might truly say, with triumph and exultation.

tion. So that reflecting upon the wild, the extravagant, the filthy behaviour of these pretenders to inspiration in this and the last century, we may the more easily give credit to the relations, made by St. *Irenæus*, *Epiphanius*, St. *Austin*, *Philastrinus* and others, of the hereticks of the first ages, who fell into those gross and horrid scandals and miscarriages of life, which one cannot think on, much less read, without trembling and amazement. Even truth it self would suffer, if it came out of the mouths of such profligate wretches as these are: for it would be questioned, if it were truth or no, and much more divine truth, which purifies the mind, and enlightens the understanding, and gives it a clear sight of the necessity, of the decency, of the beauty, of the perfection of holiness, and raises morality to the highest pitch it is capable of. Whatever doctrine corrupts and overthrows it, cannot be from the Spirit of God. By this we may most certainly, nay infallibly judge of the folly, of the vanity, of the wickedness of the pretensions of private impulses to do evil, as to hang ones self, to leap into a well or river, to kill ones mother or son, and the like. It is an evil spirit, which suggests to the violation of the laws of God and nature. They, who are led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God, says the Apostle, *Rom. 8. ch. 14. v.* and are holy, as he is holy, and purifie their souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit; as Saint Peter speaks, *1 Pet. 1. 22.*

As to what concerns God's commanding *Abraham* to offer up his son in the way of sacrifice, that is plainly, to take away the life of an innocent person, and embroue his hands in his blood; I shall not at present dispute with the *Schoolmen*, who are over-curious and very bold in their determinations, how far, and in what manner God may or can dispense with the law of nature, which,  
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(whatsoever power he may have over his creatures, by virtue of his full and absolute right and dominion over them) forbids us to do the least act of cruelty and injustice to the prejudice of any ones life, much more to the taking it away ; but shall only observe in brief,

1. That the event shewed, that this was done only for the tryal of *Abraham's* faith and obedience.

2. That out of a just and due regard to the honour of the great Patriarchs piety, we may well suppose, that he was most assuredly satisfied, whatever way the revelation came to him, whether in a vision, or by the appearance of an Angel, or by a voice from heaven, that it was from God, who had before given him many infallible proofs of his will and presence in other instances, and that that God, who had so wonderfully manifested his care of, and goodness toward him, would not suffer him to be imposed upon and enticed to commit such an unnatural act by the suggestions of an evil spirit.

3. That the dispensations of those times, both before the giving of the law and under it, are much different from what they are now under the Gospel : in which God has so plainly and expressly revealed his will from heaven, as to our behaviour and practice : and

4. That no extraordinary actions mentioned in the holy scriptures, much less such a one, as nature abhors and starts at at the very first proposal, ought to be drawn into example and practice at this time, unless they can infallibly pretend to a divine command to do it, and this confirmed by a miracle : which would be a most absurd pretension : because they ought to be before-hand infallibly assured, that God will command them to do nothing, which is directly repugnant to his will already revealed.

4 Proposition. Whatever revelation or doctrine pretends  
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to dissolve the bands of government, and of obedience to the civil Magistrate, under a shew of setting up the kingdom of *Christ*, or of popular reformation, and to free subjects from their oaths of allegiance, and the obligations of duty, which they owe to their natural Prince, cannot be of God: because *God is not the author of confusion*, ὅτι γὰρ ἐστὶν ἀκαταστασίας, is not a God of an unquiet, unsettled, and confounding nature, but a *God of peace*, and order, as in all the Churches of the Saints, 1 Cor. 14. 33. so in all the world, and has laid down rules for the peaceable and orderly government of it, and has planted in mens nature inclinations to society, which is supported by it, and has commanded all subjects, *not only for wrath, but for conscience sake*, that is, not only out of a principle of fear to avoid the just punishment of the law inflicted upon offenders, but out of a principle of religion, to obey the sovereign power set over them: it being the constitution and ordinance of God, which God cannot be supposed to destroy and pull down by any new revelation, contrary to his declared will, and the establisht order and rules of providence, whereby he governs all things here below.

It is an *Antichristian* spirit, which dictates sedition and rebellion, which puts the sword into the hands of enraged Enthusiasts, and bids them fight the Lord's battles, and destroy all opposers of his kingdom, and propagate their vile opinions by fury, violence, and arms. *Mahomet* indeed pretended, that God, having tryed all fair ways to reduce men to the obedience of his laws, but without effect and success, at last commissioned him to force the new law, which he was to publish, upon the minds of men, not with arguments of reason, and the mild and gentle arts of perswasion, but with arguments of terror and irresistible fury, not hoping to prevail other-



otherwise in the way of conviction. This furious tempest threw down the *Grecian* Empire, and has given since many a shock to *Christendom*, a zeal for their superstition animating them, and setting a sharp edge upon their natural fierceness, and heightening their courage. And it were to be wisht, that this cursed principle had only prevailed among the gross and brutish followers and disciples of that *Arabian* false Prophet. It was the same evil spirit, which hurried on the *Anabaptists* to commit those horrid violences at *Munster*, and elsewhere in *Germany*, to ravage and destroy, and murder all, who would not own their idle phantasies for divine revelations, and do homage to the new *King of Sion*, the hair-

brain'd Taylor of *Leyden*, (p) who was to take possession of the throne of his father *David*, and to be the Universal Monarch, by the will and command of God, as he and his deluded followers pretend-

(p) V. Sleidani commentar, de statu religionis & reip. Carolo V. Cæsare, lib. 10. editionis Francofurtanæ, in octav. 1610. p. 253.

ed: and what the *Fifth-monarchy-men* would have been at here in *England*, if they had had power to justify their bloody furious tenents, may be sufficiently guest, when a handful of men soon after the restoration of the Monarchy, led on by General *Vennor*, and armed with prophecy, that one should chase away a thousand, and being spirited with a mad zeal and belief of divine impulse, made bold attempts upon the government, and desperately threw their lives away in a fit of religious phrensy.

The true spirit of the *Christian* religion consists in holiness and peaceableness of temper: it stills the rage and fury of the passions: it quiets all discontents: it condemns all rancour, and malice, and revenge, as unreasonable and sinful: it endues all true *Christians* with generous thoughts and designs of doing good, of being

loving, and kind, and charitable, and indispensably requires obedience and submission to lawful authority. Such doctrines then, whatever private impulse the spreaders of them may pretend to, which overthrow the designs of the divine providence, and the ends of religion and government, upon which, as upon two pillars, the peace of the world is sustained, cannot be from the Spirit of God, which is a mild, gentle spirit, and inspires the mind with calmness of temper, and universal charity. How much and how far the fiery men of the Church of *Rome*, and several among us, within the compass of less than fifty years, to whose bitterness, faction, and unwarrantable and unjust separation from the Apostolical government and communion of the Church of *England*, we owe all the miseries of the unnatural war, and the dismal and fatal consequences of it, partake of the wild temper of the *Enthusiast*, I will not now stand to enquire, but leave it to the judicious Reader's serious and impartial consideration. But whilst the *Sectaries* and the *Jesuited Papists*, how opposite soever they may seem in other things, agree in this wicked principle, which allows the excommunicating and deposing of sovereign Princes, and resisting lawful Governours, and arming the people against their Prince, upon any pretense whatever, whether of authority from the *Pope*, or a *co-ordinate Power*, tho' they fall not into the extravagance and phrensie of the wild *Enthusiast*, who justifies his rebellious disobedience by pretending immediate revelation from heaven, they are to excuse us, if we call things by their proper names, and are to thank themselves and their evil principles, if they fall under the same censure and condemnation.

Secondly ;



Secondly ; We are to examine the designs and tendencies of pretended inspiration and revelation, with the several effects and influences, whether good or bad, which they have upon religion, manners, and civil life : and this I shall comprize in the following particulars.

I. Whatever pretended revelation or inspiration does embase the true spirit of religion, or suggest to any childish phantasies or extravagant behaviour, or introduces any superstition in the worship and service of God, cannot be from his Spirit. For true religion fills the mind with generous thoughts of God, agreeable to his nature, and worthy of him, and requires nothing from us, but what is grave, and serious, and consonant to the laws of exact reason : there is nothing trivial and toyish in it, nothing but what becomes God to exact, and us to perform : it does not consist in any odd, foolish, antick gestures, and sudden fits and starts of indiscreet devotion, and unaccountable fallies of passion, or in a foolish imitation of any extraordinary example, recorded in the holy scriptures, but in a settled composure of mind, enflamed with the love of God, in a calm and sedate temper, and in perfect submission to God's will, whatever the events of things are, in humility and purity, and in an exact conformity of life to his laws, and to the rules laid down in the scriptures, and to the direction of unbiaſt and unprejudicate reason in all doubtful cases. So that we may most justly and assuredly conclude, all such to be miserably deluded, as pretend to visions and apparitions of our B. Saviour, the Virgin Mary, Angels, and Saints departed, and to familiar conversation with them, with which not only the old Legends, but the elaborate compositions of the lives of the modern Saints, published by authority, and with the approbation of the greatest Clerks in the *Roman Church*, are horribly stuffed.

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One while they phanſy *Chriſt* to crown them with a garland of flowers, or to preſent them with a chaplett, a roſe, a bracelet, a ring, or a chain, as a mark of his love and affection; and to be eſpouſed to ſome of the ſtricter and devouter ſiſters of a Convent, with the uſual ſolemnities of a wedding: another while the *B. Virgin* is ſaid to appear with the holy *Jeſus* in her arms, as if he were a child ſtill, to come and viſit ſick perſons in their agonies, dreſs their wounds, and adminiſter phyſick to them, and ſometimes deſcend to the mean office of a midwife, to ſave the reputation of a prostituted Nunn. Voices are ſuppoſed to be heard, either in the air, or elſe from a Crucifix, or from the picture of a Madonna, which are oftentimes as to their ſenſe trivial and weak, and infinitely below the majeſty of *God* and *Chriſt* to ſuggeſt. All this while theſe pretended viſions may be only the ideas and images of our *B. Saviour*, and the *Virgin*, ſtrongly imprinted upon their imaginations, which they in the height of their ecſtatick fits and raptures take to be without them, or elſe they may be the artifices of an evil ſpirit, by the permiſſion and juſt judgment of *God*, when they will not be governed in a way ſuitable to reaſon, but abandon themſelves wholly to their bewildred phanſy: the devil oftentimes, that he may deceive with the greater eaſe, transforming himſelf into an Angel of light. And that the devil does play theſe tricks, and does impoſe upon credulous and phanſiful perſons in this manner, is confeſſed by the ſobereſt writers of the *Roman* communion, and among others, by (q) Cardinal *Bona*, who begin to be aſhamed of this pretenſion, which prevailed ſo much in the times of ignorance, and blindneſs, and ſuperſtition, before the Reformation, and caution their people againſt it, and particularly that the Devil has and does often appear in the form and ſhape of *Chriſt*,

(q) De diſ-  
cretione  
ſpirituum,  
cap. 19.  
ſect. 7. edi-  
tionis Pari-  
ſiæ p. 367.



Christ, the Virgin *Mary*, and the other Saints, (r) and that the five wounds have been made by the wiles of the Devil in the bodies of men and women, of which he instanceth in two Nunns, whereof the one was *Mary of the Visitation*, Prioress of the *Annunciata* at *Lisbon*, the same holy woman, who blessed the invincible *Spanish Armada* in the year 1588. an accompt of whose diabolical tricks and cheats is set forth at large not only by (s) *Cypriano de Valera* an honest converted Fryer, but also by (t) *Ludovicus a Paramo*, a *Spanish Inquisitor* of *Sicily*, in his book *de origine & progressu officii S. Inquisitionis*, published at *Madrid* ten years after: the other of *Magdalene Crucia*, or of the *Cross*, concerning whose villainous impostures the curious Reader may consult (u) *Wierus*.

(r) Sect. 9.  
pag. 375.

(s) *Enxambre de los falsos milagros, y ilusiones del demonio* — at the end of his dos *Tratados* printed at *London* 1599.

(t) *Ludovicus a Paramo* *Archidiaconus & Canonicus Legionensis, & regni Siciliae Inquisitor, de origine & progressu officii S. Inquisitionis, Matrili* 1598. lib. 2. tit. 2. c. 15. n. 11. p. 233. *Maria visitationis sive de Annunciatione — que vana ac falsa glorie bacchata cupidine, inaudita hypocrisis versutis diu multumque sub specie*

*sanctitatis universum orbem decepit*: that she hurried on with a mad desire of vain glory, by the wiles of an unheard-of dissimulation, very much and a long time deceived the whole world under a shew of sanctity: and among others the magnified *Lewis* of *Granada* her Confessor, and a great number of Dominican Fryers, and particularly their general Prior, who came to make enquiry about the stigmata or wounds; which she pretended were imprinted upon her body by the special favour of God; whereof that in her side seemed to be opened *velut ictu lancee*, as it were with the piercing of a lance. These five wounds were imprinted in the fashion of a *Cross* upon linnen, and sent as presents to the *Pope*, and other great persons, out of the height of devotion, together with her picture drawn to the life, and a book was published of the extraordinary zeal, piety and miracles of her life: so that the fame of this Nunn was not confined to *Portugal*, *Spain* and *Italy*, but was diffused as far as the *East-Indies*: but at last they discovered *eius hypocrite dolos & diabolicas calliditates*, the diabolical artifices and tricks of this wicked dissembling woman, but of thirty two years of age. and how she made the several wounds in her body: for which the *Inquisitors* past a severe sentence upon her *Dec. 8. 1588.* which is there set down at large. But there was a further design in this cheat, which was to make *Portugal* to revolt from *Philip* the second of *Spain*, p. 302. who made good the title he pretended to that Crown, by a powerful army under the conduct of the Duke of *Alva*, who subjected it by the force of arms to the obedience of his Master.

(u) *De præstigiis daemonum. lib. 6. cap. 6. Basilee* 1583.

And if so, what then will become of this part of the pretended conformity between *Christ* and *Saint Francis*,  
(who

(who would be taken for *Christ*, if he were seen without his frock and cowle, and *Christ* for him, if he put on the others habit, as they most absurdly banter) in which the Fryers of his order do so mightily triumph? What credit can any sober man give to the pretended inspirations and revelations of such ecstatical persons, whose imaginations are disturbed, whose passions are violent, and whose brains are so giddy and weak, all which render them obnoxious to ten thousand delusions, if the matter of them were orthodox and pious, and did not any way misbecome the gravity, the wisdom, the purity of the *Christian* religion, and make way for superstitious idle practices, to the great prejudice of true, real, and solid piety and devotion? And yet upon no better foundation has the institution of most, if not all, the Religious Orders of the *Roman* Church, even from *St. Benedict* to *Philip Neri*, been raised; and these men, and especially *St. Dominic*, *St. Francis*, and *Ignatius Loiola*, who have been so fanatical and enthusiastical in their temper, must pass for men inspired, and all that they have done, either by themselves or their followers, (who by their wilful poverty, and the severities of a recluse life, and by their industry and learning, have contributed so much to the support of the *Roman* Church, which otherwise, as (x) *Macchiavel* speaks it out plainly, would have been long since overthrown and destroyed by the pride, by the luxury, by the ignorance and sloth of the Cardinals, (who from being poor Parish Priests and Deacons of *Rome*, are become but one degree below crowned heads) and the other great Ecclesiasticks among the

(x) Discorsi sopra la prima deca de Tito Livio, lib. 3. cap. 1. Quanto alle sette si vede ancora queste rinovazioni essere necessarie per l'esempio della nostra religione, la quale si non fusse stata ritirata verso il suo principio da San Francesco e da San Dominico, sarebbe al tutto spenta, perche questi con la povertà & con l'esempio della vita di Christo la ridussero nella mente de gli huomini, che già vi era spenta: e furono sì potenti gli ordini loro, che ci sono cagione, che la deshonestà de' Prelati e de' capi della religione non la rouini—

Seculars)



Seculars) ascribed to the dictates and operations of the holy *Ghost*. For all the great care, that is said to be taken by the Cardinals of the congregation *degli riti*, in examining witnesses about the lives, and behaviour, and miracles of the persons, who are to be either beatified or canonized, which adds so much to the temporal as well as spiritual revenue of the Church, and keeps up the splendour and pomp of the Court, and the great offices of it, whoever will peruse carefully the lives of *St. Mary Magdalene of Pazzi*, our *Carmelite* Nunn, sainted by *Clement* the ixth, in the year 1669. to which this discourse of trying the spirits, may serve as a useful appendix, or (y) that of *St. Rose*, a religieuse of the third order of *St. Dominic*, born at *Lima* the capital City of *Peru*, in the *Southern America*, about one hundred years ago (1586.) beatified by the same Pope the year before, and sainted some few years after by his successor *Clement* the tenth, both published by authority, and written with the greatest advantage to them and their order, will be justly tempted to believe, that if they had lived in *England*, and had been to be tryed in any of our civil or spiritual Courts, not only by the laws of the Country, but by all rules of discreet and sober reason and *Christian* behaviour, they would have been lookt upon as a couple of Quakers, or phrantick Enthusiasts, troubled with hysterical fits, and other distempers, incident to melancholy persons of that sex.

(y) La vie de la bien heureuse  
Epouse de Jesus Christ, Soeur  
Rose de Sainte Marie—par le  
R. P. Jean Bapt. Feuillet de  
l'ordre des FF. Precheurs à Pa-  
ris 1669. 120.

2. Whatever revelation or inspiration under pretense of exalting humane nature, and of a more perfect way of life, does tend either to the diminution or overthrow of the established duties of religion, and the offices of civil life, cannot be from *God*; because he hath estab-

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lished

established decency and order in his Church, and has given us rules to frame our lives by, and requires most strictly from every one in their several stations and qualities, the exercises of justice and charity, and humble and modest and respectful deportment to our superiours, and not to be phantastick and singular, and void of the common notions of civility, which custom and the laws of our Country have introduced: and therefore he cannot be supposed to inspire persons with contrary principles, and dispense with those establishments, without which religion and good manners would lose their efficacy on the minds of men, and become empty notions, and the world would quickly grow a stranger to them, and at last become wild and barbarous. Thus when the

(x) Ludovicus a Paramo, lib. 3. quæst. 5. n. 189. p. 680. Illuminati hæretici, qui superbiâ & inobedienciâ contra Prælatos elati, pertinaciter

(z) *Alumbrados* or *Illuminati*, who began first to appear in *Spain* about the year 1575. and after brake out about 1623: taught, that mental prayer with a fixt and settled intention of mind and deep contemplation was only necessary, and that all other devotion was useless (which perchance is the opinion of the *Quietisti*, lately revived by *Molinos* a *Spanish* secular Priest in *Naples*) what did they else but lop off at one blow the use of the holy Sacrament, and the whole external service of *God*, in places solemnly dedicated to his worship? but has not the idle, in suis illusionibus perseverantes, appetitu libidinis, excellentiæ & honoris indebiti, infelicitèr perierunt, abeuntes post desideria sua, dicentes se immediatè regi ab spiritu sancto — & pag. 302, Sacerdotes insurrexerunt ambiciosi, impuri, libidinosi, auram popularem aucupantes, qui se à Deo illuminatos prædicando, detestabiles errores disseminabant. Spordan. ad ann. 1623. n. 7. — secta Illuminatorum, qui obtentu orationis mentalis & contemplationis divinæ atque unionis cum Deo, quibus se præditos jactabant, Sacramenta Ecclesiæ, prædicationem verbi Dei, aliaque pia exercitia flocci faciebant, eam adeò extollentes, ut etiam ad turpia commercia ejus vi absque peccato venire posse affirmarent. Louis Abelli, denombrement des heresies à Paris 1661. quarto, pag. 84. that among other errors they maintained, que certaines ardeurs, tremblemens de corps, pâmoisons & autres choses, qui leur animent en faisant l'oraison mentale, estoient des marques assurées, qu'on estoit en estat de grace, & qu'on avoit le saint esprit; que ceux, qui avoient ces marques, n'avoient plus de besoin de faire aucuns bonnes oeuvres, qu'ils estoient gouvernez & conduits par le saint esprit, & par consequence, qu'ils devoient seulement suivre le mouvement & l'inspiration interieure, qu'ils ressentoient.

foppish,



foppish, and superstitious ceremonies, and meer scenical representations introduced in the *Roman* worship, which is now become a meer piece of pageantry, only to please and entertain the senses, without the true life and spirit of devotion, occasioned considering men to disrelish first, and at last relinquish such external pompous services, as hindrances of true devotion? But if the beauties and solemnities of holy worship regulated and bounded by true measures of piety and decency, and adapted to the increase of devotion in the people, were to be laid aside, what need would there be of confessing *Christ* with our mouths, or of praying to *God* in the publick offices of the Church, or of praising him with joyful lips in the solemn assemblies? the whole service of *God* would be but a dumb shew, and all things relating to *God's* honour would be transacted in a kind of fullen and mopish silence. This single opinion is a just and sufficient bar against the vanity and impiety of their high-flown pretensions: and when the same enlightned persons had wrought themselves into this persuasion, that not purity of intention, nor strictness of life, nor the practice of moral virtues, added to a sound and entire faith of the mysteries of religion, as revealed in scripture, but certain ardors and excessive heats and inflammation, caused by the immoderate ebullitions of the blood, and by the accessions of the feavourish distemper, and by the workings and evaporations of heated melancholy, and immediately succeeding fainting fits and deliquiums, and shiverings and tremblings of the joynts were signs and marks of grace; what does this tend to, but to evacuate the law of *Christ*, and the end and design of his coming, to plant a wise and sober religion in the world, and to advance the glory of *God*, and the eternal welfare of mankind by the joynt and united exercises of regular devotion?

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And

And how much *Quakerism*, which first began in a Catholick Country, as they call it, has been improved here in *England* from the year 1648. or 1652. when that absurd and irrational sect first started up; the horrid and cursed blasphemies attributed by them to the dictates of the spirit within them, which overthrow the fundamental principles of *Christianity*, vented and owned by them in their pamphlets, tho' of late the Enthusiastick humor is somewhat abated, and is not quite so furious, are too sad and too convincing a demonstration?

3. Whatever revelation or inspiration tends only to gratifie the itch of curiosity, may justly be suspected not to come from the Spirit of God. The revelations of scripture were designed by *God* for use and advantage, to foretel or declare something, that was of mighty concern to mankind, or to that particular nation, to whom the Prophet was directed and sent, and to admonish, and instruct, and reform. So the great mysteries of faith, when reflected upon with due reverence, and with that just care, which they challenge, conduce very much to the improvement of our devotion, and to the love of *God*, and have a most kindly and vigorous influence upon our lives, and are a most effectual instrument of practical *Christianity*. *The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every one to profit withal*, 1 *Corinth.* 12. 7. which the Apostle there shews by the enumeration of those spiritual gifts and graces, which were then most necessary for the planting and establishing the Christian Church: gifts, which have no affinity, no relation to the studies of Philosophy, which did not suggest how to find out any new hypothesis of the systeme of the world, or solve the secret operations of nature, or the various phenomena of the heavens, or serve only to tell stories, and amuse the world with surprizing accompts of things, much less introduce a mystical



myftical canting and nonfence, and uncouth notions of the fpirit of the air, and the like, in the explication of matters either of a Theological or Philofophical argument; fuch as are found in the writings of *Paracelfus* and the *Pfendo-chymifts*, and of *Weigelius*, and of *Christianus Rosencreutz*, from whom the abfurd feft of the *Rofycrucians* derive their name, *but to one was given by the fpirit the word of wifdom*, that is, an ability to preach and manifef the myfteries of the *Chriftian* religion, which is elfewhere called the wifdom of God: *to another the word of knowledge by the fame fpirit*, a clear understanding of the fcriptures: *to another faith by the fame fpirit*, and undaunted courage and refolution of going on in converting the world to the true knowledge of God, and belief of *Chrift*, notwithstanding all oppofition: *to another the gifts of healing by the fame fpirit*, a power of healing all manner of difeafes, thò never fo inveterate, and otherwife incurable, and that immediately, without the tedious methods of phyfick, only by a touch or a word fpeaking: *to another the working of miracles*, a power of doing things above the power of nature, and which none but fuch as are fent by God can do: *to another prophecy*, a power of foretelling things to come, or rather, an extraordinary faculty of declaring the mind of God in their fermons and difcourfes: *to another discerning of fpirits*, either a wonderful fagacity to know the very thoughts of the heart, which part of divine knowledge God was pleafed to impart to them, or rather, which I take to be the true meaning of the phrafe, *διεξετάς πνευμάτων*, a perfect, a clear, a comprehensive knowledge of the feveral pretentions to the fpirit, whether they were juft and true, or whether falfe and counterfeit; and this at firft fight, without any laborious fearch and examination: *to another divers kinds of tongues*, which miraculous gift was not confined to the  
Apoftles

*Apostles* on the day of Pentecost, but continued for some time in the Church: *to another the interpretation of tongues*, a power to explain to the people in plain and easie expressions in a language, which they understood, what another had spoken before in a language to them unknown. All these miraculous gifts in those first times of *Christianity*, were of absolute use, and without which the world had not been so easily converted. But since the establishment of the *Christian Church*, the state of it now being so different from what it was at first, there is no need of such extraordinary helps and assistances; the holy scriptures being our rule and guide in matters of faith and doctrine, and the rules and constitutions of Ecclesiastical government, under the protection of the Civil power, setting bounds to schism and licentiousness and enthusiasm, and humane industry and study, assisted by God's blessing and providence, supplying the want of immediate inspiration: as we shall see presently more at large.

In the third place, I propose to shew in brief the different manner of the operation of the Spirit of God from that of the evil and lying spirit, or of ordinary nature heightened either by phansy or distemper: which I shall cast into the following particulars.

1. The Spirit of God works upon the understanding in the way of rational conviction: and therefore he leaves us to the free use of our reason in the tryal and examination of what is proposed to us; he satisfies us of the truth of Religion, and the authority of divine revelations, and of the nature of our duty, and the indispensable necessity of it by arguments agreeable to our faculties, and which we cannot but submit to, and which will create in us a full assurance of faith, if we have honest and sincere desires of understanding the mind of God fully revealed in  
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the holy scriptures, and of doing it according to the measures of our knowledge, in all the various circumstances of our lives, as his grace shall enable us, and bring such dispositions of mind toward it, as not to reject whatever is proposed to us with such just and satisfactory evidence. By virtue of which supernatural energy and operation of the Spirit of God, the *Christian* religion so mightily prevailed over the world, against all the opposition of the civil powers, against all the learning and subtilty of the Heathen Philosophers, against all the contrivances and artifices of Politicians, and the utmost malice of the Devil and his instruments, who bent their whole strength and force to suppress and overthrow the profession and belief of it. It is certain, that the holy Apostles were furnished with extraordinary measures of the grace of this holy Spirit, in order to the gaining credit to their doctrine, and to the establishment of Christianity: the power of miracles with which they were endued, was a full and convincing proof of the truth of their pretensions: they were the chosen of God to proclaim the mystery of our redemption by the blood of his Son throughout the world: and after the ascension of our Saviour, who had instructed them in the knowledge of his truth, such extraordinary assistance was but necessary, for the accomplishing the design of God in the conversion of sinners from their idolatries and wickednesses to the true knowledge and worship of God, and to holiness of life. But besides their general commission, there was oftentimes great need of particular direction: what they should do, and how they should act, and where their labour might be bestowed with the best advantage; and to satisfy them about the success and events of things in that and in the following ages, as to the overthrow of the *Jewish* Polity, and the revolutions of the *Roman*.

(o) Euseb.  
hist. Eccles.  
lib. 5. c. 17.  
Epiphani-  
us in hare-  
si Cata-  
phryga-  
rum, sect. 2.

Roman Empire, and the great alterations, which would follow upon the preaching of the *Christian doctrine*, they had particular revelations made by visions, as to St. Peter when fallen into an ecstasy or trance, *Acts* 10. 10. or by an Angel as to Philip, *Acts* 8. 26. to St. Paul often, and to St. John, *Revel.* 1. 10. and the like; but these, as all the other true Prophets of God in their discourses, which was lookt upon as a distinguishing character between them, (o) retained their reason and understanding and a serene & quiet temper of mind: the Prophetick spirit not being upon them in their ecstasies, but afterwards: whereas such as most falsely usurpt that name, as *Montanus* and his followers, in venting their phantasies became wild and furious, and through immoderate and excessive transports fell from a wilful ignorance into an involuntary madness. And not only so, but the subject matter of these visions and ecstasies were of mighty concern, and had a publick influence upon the whole state of the Church, and the event added to the authority of their former commission, proved, that they were from God: and the visible effect of the descent of the Spirit of God upon several of the new converts, such, as were their prophesying and speaking with tongues, was a further confirmation of their mission and doctrine. These gifts of the Spirit of God continued in the Church for some time: but to prevent all confusion and disorder in their religious assemblies, in such as had them, and the imposture of meer pretenders and false Prophets, which were gone out into the world, the Apostles laid down laws of discipline and behaviour, directed and regulated their zealous affecting and coveting of spiritual gifts, established standing rules and principles of order and decency in the Church, and sufficiently taught them, that the Christian religion was a holy, and a sober, and a wise institution, and that God's wor-

ship



ship and service was to be managed and conducted, as with the highest fervors of zeal, so with just measures of prudence and understanding, and that edification, and the spiritual advantage of Christian people, and not private amusement and ostentation, was the end and design of those manifestations of the spirit.

The Spirit of God does not extinguish and supersede the use of our faculties, but stirs them up and enlightens them; excites in our minds firm purposes of seeking after the truth, assists our endeavours, and puts us upon a diligent search and enquiry into the ways and means of knowing the will of God: and such humble and industrious enquirers are blessed with the knowledge of it, at least with those degrees and measures of it, which are necessary to their salvation: and to such as make use of the ordinary means, as diligent consideration and reading of the scriptures, a belief of the necessary points of faith, proposed by the Apostles to the first converts, as they lye every where dispersed in their writings, where they are delivered, without any obscurity or perplexity of expression, in plain Propositions, which the meanest understanding may easily apprehend; humility and submission of judgment to the clear light of revelation; integrity and honesty of mind, and a sincere aim and endeavouring after truth, without the least bias of corrupt affection and interest, and the like: the assistance of the Spirit of God is never wanting: and tho we do not pretend to say, such are extraordinarily inspired, as were the Prophets and the Apostles of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, of which there is no necessity after the miraculous confirmation of the truth of the *Christian* religion in its first planting, or are vested with infallibility, yet they are notwithstanding secured from erring dangerously, and may have a certain assurance in their minds,

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that

that they embrace and retain all those essential truths of religion which God thought fit to reveal, as necessary to the Christian Church, and to the bringing all true believers to heaven, without the aid and assistance of immediate inspiration.

Our faith being founded on the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, which is contained in the canon of the scriptures of the new Testament, there can be no recourse to any private revelation, supposed to be made by the Spirit of God, in matters of that argument, by way of addition and supplement: which was the false principle of *Montanus*, and what soon made an easy way for the several blasphemies, which He and his sect were guilty of. But that he was endued with a Pro-

phetick spirit, there was no other proof, (b) but that he was often ecstatical, and bereft of his understanding, and in his Enthusiastick delirium vented notions, which were altogether new and absurd, and unheard of in the Church of God; as (c) did his two chief assistants, *Prisca* and *Maximilla*, two rich women, who becoming as mad as he, propagated the same vile opinions, under the title of divine revelation and prophecy. Nay, the infatuation was so great, (c) that he said, that he was the promised *Paraclete*, and his deluded followers as easily belie-

(b) Euseb. *historiæ Eccles.* lib. 5. cap. 16. — πνδμαλοφορη-  
θῆναι τε καὶ ἀφροδῖως ἐν καὶ οὐχ ἡ  
πνὶ καὶ παρεκστασὶ γινόμενον ἐν-  
θουσιᾶν. ἀρξασθαι τε λαλεῖν καὶ  
ξενοφωνεῖν παρὰ τὸ κατὰ παρα-  
δοσιν, καὶ κατὰ διαδοχὴν ἀναδεν εἰς  
ἐκκλησίας ἐθ. δὴθεν περὶ ἐλδι-  
ον. Vide quoque cap. 17.

(c) S. Hieronym. adv. Pelagi-  
anos ad Cresiphontem. Mon-  
tani immundi spiritus prædi-  
cator, multas Ecclesias per  
Priscam & Maximillam, nobi-  
les & opulentas feminas, pri-  
mum auro corrumpit, deinde hæ-  
resi polluit. (c) S. Hieronymus  
ad Hedibiam, ep. 150. quæst. 9.

(d) — Quia ved him, (d) maintaining, that God designing to save the  
per duos world by Moses and the Prophets, and that this taking no  
gradus effect, he assumed a body of the Virgin, and that preaching  
mundum  
salvare ne-

quiverit, ad extremum per Spiritum S. in Montanum, Priscam & Maximillam, insanas femi-  
nas, descendisse, & plenitudinem, quam Paulus non habuerit—abscissum & semivirum ha-  
buisset Montanum. S. Hieron. epist. 54. ad Marcellam adversus Montanum.



*in Christ, sub specie filii, he dyed for us : but not being able to save the world this way, he at last descended by the holy Ghost upon Montanus, and the two Prophetesses.*---But was their doctrine and behaviour like that of persons truly inspired ? were their prophecies ever fulfilled or accomplished ? did the Apostles run up and down like men distracted, and out of their wits ? did the Spirit of God carry them besides themselves, and deprive them of the use of their reason and understanding ? Did they act the part of Demoniacks ? Did they not allege arguments to perswade and satisfie the understanding, and make use of rational methods of conviction ? not as these pretenders, who poured forth great swelling words of vanity, which might amaze and confound, but no way instruct or direct the hearers in a course of sober piety and devotion. And yet see the bewitchery of the false zeal and enthusiastical madness of these pretended Prophets, who, to keep up the credit of their pretensions, distinguished themselves from others by extraordinary fastings and other strictnesses and severities of life : with which bait the simple were allured into the snare. But one would be astonished, and scarce think it possible, that *Tertullian*, a man of a shrewd wit, and piercing judgment, and excellent learning, who had deserved well of the Catholick Church by his admirable writings, should ever fall into this dotage, and embrace *Montanism*, but that we oftentimes see the evil effects, which discontent has upon the understanding of the wise and learned, and that even how good men too, when once they are prejudiced against truth, are wrought upon by meer shews and external regards and semblances of religion, which are besides the common and ordinary practice, which seems in comparison mean and contemptible : which was the deplorable case of this great man, whose

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discontent,

discontent, heightned and exasperated by the ill usage, which he met with from the *Roman* Clergy, made him forsake the communion of the Church, and take revenge upon the whole body, by joyning himself to a contrary party, who seemed extraordinarily zealous: and whose ignorance of the causes of natural and fanatical enthusiasm made him fatally mistake the ventings and swellings of splenetick vapours, and the wild ravings and effusions of seemingly religious melancholists, for the affections and inspirations of the Spirit of God. But the

sad end, which common fame said befel (o) *Montanus* and *Maximilla*, besides the madness and extravagance of their doctrine and behaviour, was another convincing demonstration, by what spirit they were acted, both of them in their Enthusiastick fits hanging themselves.

(o) Euseb. hist. Eccles. lib. 5. cap. 16. — τέτρες ὑπὸ πνιδιμαῖο βλαφθέντες ἐκείνους ὑποκινήσαντες λόγους ἀναρτήσαντες ἐαυτοὺς — S. Hieronymus de scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis in Apollonio.

2. The Spirit of God fills the mind with plain, clear, and easie notions of God, of holiness, and the life to come. And this he does by supplying the defects of nature, by removing corrupt and perverse prejudices, and by enlightning the understanding, and making it capable to receive divine truth with the same ease and delight, as a well disposed eye takes in the rayes of light. There is no force put upon the rational faculties, no overwhelming or confounding them with notions, which have no connexion, no agreeableness with reason, or good sense, or the nature of the soul, which is no longer rational, then as it understands it self, and governs its motions and operations by the common and universal maxims of reason, which the Spirit of God never contradicts. There are indeed great difficulties and obscurities in Prophecies, arising not only from figurative expressions, in which oftentimes they are involved, and peculiar idioms of the dialect,



dialect, in which they were at first delivered, but from the unusualness of the argument, which only length of time and the fulfilling of those Prophecies can satisfactorily make out and explain. And so not only in Saint Pauls epistles, but in other parts of scripture, *there may be some things hard to be understood, which they, that are unlearned and unstable, wrest unto their own destruction:* but which learned men, furnished with the exact knowledge of the original languages, and the concurrent history and synchronisms of that age, and the events of the succeeding, by the blessing of God upon their laborious researches and diligent study, wisely interpret and give good accompts of: and herein the great usefulness and necessity of humane learning does fully appear and shew it self: and we have seen in our days the fatal, the pernicious, the damnable mistakes that have been made by deluded people, who pretended to interpret scripture by the spirit. But still there is nothing in scripture, no not in the most difficult parts of it, which the understanding can justly choquer at, or dislike, or reject. It may be above its reach, but no way repugnant to it. And so for the great mysteries of the *Christian* religion, which the wisdom of God has thought fit to reveal, tho we cannot fully and adequately comprehend them, our faculties being finite, and tho we neither can nor ought to judge of them by rules borrowed from inferior sciences, yet the divine authority of the revelation gives the highest satisfaction imaginable to the most inquisitive and searching reason: so that God does not impose upon us, and force us to believe whether we will or no: but even leaves us to judge whether we can or ought to disbelieve what he has given us such just proof and assurance, that he has revealed, upon this meer pretense only, because we cannot make it out by natural principles.

principles. But as to what relates to his nature, and the infinite perfections of his attributes, and to the express declarations of his will concerning our duty and behaviour, and his rewarding and punishing us in the other world, according as we either perform or neglect our duty, there is that easiness, that brightness, that agreeableness of these notions with our faculties, that we may as well call in question and deny the judgment of our senses, as the judgment of our reason in these matters. But notwithstanding, our contemplation of divine and spiritual things is to be kept and restrained within its just limits: it must not pass beyond what is clearly revealed in scripture: right and sober reason is always to accompany it in its highest flights: for if once the mind gives way to roving phansy, or is over-curious in its speculations, vainly and wantonly pursuing what it cannot reach, it soon loses the command of it self, and becomes intoxicated with dreams of folly and religious phrensy: and thus the brain being over-heated, and the pleasure arising from a conjunction of odd and uncouth ideas and notions very sensible and taking, and the misperwasion of being divinely inspired very strong and violent, the persons thus affected are possessed in these ecstasick fits with a fond imagination, that they see God, see his very essence, see the soul of Christ, and have intimate communion with God, and are actually united to him, and so united, that their nature, being destroyed and annihilated, is wholly changed and immersed into the abyss of his divinity, and by these means, as they rave and blaspheme, are godded with God and christed with Christ: and while the force of this delusion continues upon them, it is no wonder, that they vent such notions, which they would have taken for new discoveries concerning God and religion, that neither  
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they themselves understand, nor can make others understand ; and indeed are nothing else but insignificant jargon and noise, notwithstanding the seeming godliness of the phrases, and the mighty confidence and fervour, wherewith they are pronounced, and are by reason of their absurdity and self-contradiction altogether unintelligible : such notions I mean, destitute of all good sense and sound reason and true divinity, as are to be found in the Pamphlets of the *Quakers*, and even in the writings of *Jacob Behmen*, and *Drabicius*, as also in the revelations of Saint *Brigit*, in the life and the several tracts of Saint *Theresa*, in the raptures of Mother *Juliana*, and such other devout Enthusiasts, so highly magnified by the *Romanists* for persons truly inspired and taught of God. But if this be one of the marks of an infallible Church, that extraordinarily devout persons of their communion are favoured and honoured by God with such kind of inspiration, that at best is perfect and downright enthusiasm, (which under the pretense of exalting humane nature, and discovering divine and sublime truths, no way agreeable to scripture, takes away the use and exercise of sober reason in the knowledge, and in the service and worship of God, and unsettles and amuses and distracts and confounds the understanding with their emptiness and obscurity) we do not envy them the honour of it, and are content to teach those of our Church to be wise to sobriety, and to be content to understand the will of God, as he has been pleased to reveal it in the books of the old and new Testament, and to follow the guidance of his holy spirit in the way of enlightned reason, and to govern and direct their devotion by true rules of discretion, and to pray not only with the spirit, but with understanding also. I shall only add in brief, what might be discoursed of very copiously, that the *Platonick Philosophy*

lofophy, which being then moft in vogue gave occafion to the beginning of feveral herefies in the Primitive times, made way for this *mystick Theology*, which one, who lived about the fourth century, under the venerable name of *Dionysius the Areopagite* firft brought into the Chriftian Church: for that their notions are the fame in many things, though highly improved, is clear to thofe, who are converfant in the writings of *Plato*, and his followers, efpecially *Proclus* and *Plotinus*: and it is certain, that an ungoverned phanfy and an undue curiofity and an immoderate defire of knowing things relating to God and the other world, that he has not thought fit to manifef, either by the light of nature and reafon to the one, or by the light of fcripture and revelation to the other, added to an enthufiaftick temper of brain, have been the original of both, and that confequently that neither is to be afcribed to the influences and illapfes of the Spirit of God, who directs us in the knowledge and purfuit of divine truth in a way more fuitable to our rational faculties, and cannot be fupposed to be the infpirer of fuch uncouth and unintelligible notions, which no humane wit nor underftanding can reconcile, either with his revealed dictates, or with common reafon and fenfe.

3. The Spirit of God in his operations does not overthrow and deftroy nature. As God does treat us as rational creatures in requiring our affent to divine revelations no farther, then the motives of credibility and the other fit and proper methods of conviction will juftly challenge: fo in the laws he has prefcribed to us, as the rules and meafures of our obedience and duty, he requires nothing that is repugnant to the original conftitution of the rational nature, or what we in our fober thoughts and reflexions can complain of as over-harfh and fevere,  
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and reject as disagreeable or unjust : nothing, that is inconsistent with the condition of our being ; nothing, that overthrows the comforts and conveniences and necessary supports of life : and in this he has been pleased to shew his infinite wisdom and goodness, that as on the one hand he lays nothing upon us, which is irksome and grievous, unless we degenerate from our natures, and by vitious acts and habits make it so to our selves, or impossible to our natural strength, assisted by his grace, to perform ; so on the other, he would be honoured and served by us with a ready, with a chearful, with a willing mind : and therefore his spirit cannot be supposed to incite to any thing, which is against nature, or does enterfere with, or destroy those permissions, which our natural frame and constitution, arising from the union of soul and body, and the mutual dependence of the soul upon the good temper and disposition of the body in the exertion of its powers and faculties, during that union, renders necessary. It is undoubted, that as temperance and a strict and regular course of life are indispensably required of us, and all excess and extravagance, even in the lawful liberties of nature, are no way consistent with the gravity of the *Christian* religion ; so mortification and self-denial are necessary duties of it : but then it is certain too, that they do not consist in wearing a hair-shirt, or in going bare-foot, or in girding an iron chain about the body, or in disciplining ones self every morning, or in lying upon the ground, or in going a pilgrimage to the *holy Sepulchre*, or to *Loretto*, or to the *thresholds* of the Apostles, or to the seven Churches of *Rome*, or to the shrine of any Saint, or in wallowing naked in snow, or rousing ones self upon thorns, or in standing a winters night in a tub of water, or in a river, or in immoderate fastings to the

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great wasting and exhausting of the spirits, and to the shortning of life. We are, it is true, upon our days of mourning and sorrow for our own sins, and the sins of the nation, when we humble our selves under the mighty hand of God, to joyn to our confessions and supplications and intercessions fasting and tears; such outward acts of penitence very much assisting and promoting the inward grief of mind. But our severities are not to be immoderate and unjust, and beyond the strength of our nature and bodily constitution; and besides, are not of themselves good or laudable, but as they are made subservient to the exercises of piety. Neither nature nor religion does command us to hate our own flesh, but to nourish it and cherish it, thô not the sinful lusts and appetites of it. We are to keep the body in subjection, lest the desires of the flesh be too strong for us, and foil us, and betray us into any act of sin or folly (which method, if rightly and wisely practised, tends to the health both of body and soul) but in no wise to be cruel to it: to treat it as a friend, or at most as a servant, that it may not be rebellious against the government of reason, but be useful and serviceable, and not as an enemy, to starve it and deprive it of the necessaries of life.

The *Montanists*, the *Encratitæ*, the *Massaliani* gloried indeed in such practices and austerities, and pretended, that they were moved to them by the Spirit of God: but the orthodox *Christians* of their times rejected their pretension as weak and foolish, and derogatory to the influences of the blessed Spirit, which are mild and gentle, and such as do not oppress and torment nature: and notwithstanding their extraordinary mortification, branded them with the infamous mark and character of heresie, and lookt upon them as crazed and distracted. For certainly corporal severities cannot be supposed with  
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any shew of reason to be just signs and proofs of being inspired. For, have not the very Heathen also equalled, if not outdone, the strictest orders of Religious among *Christians*? Have not they their *Recluses* and *Eremites*, such as live in convents, and in deserts, or upon rocks, and in caves and grottas? are they not as nice and strict in their abstinencies? and do they not impose upon themselves as severe penances? The *Bonzi* among the *Chineses*, and the *Dervises* among the *Mahometans*, may justly vye with them, and as strange things are related of them, as are to be found in the life of the strictest Nunn or Fryer whatever. All which may be but the effect of superstition, which, whether it arises out of an evil opinion of God, as if he were delighted in uncouth gestures and postures, in rigorous abstinences, in whipping and mangling the body, or in such like cruelty, or out of an opinion of merit and supererogation, and putting God in their debt, it is superstition still, and may proceed from the suggestions of an evil spirit. For that the Devil, who adapts his temptations to every ones natural complexion and humor, perswades oftentimes to immoderate fastings and watchings, and other excessive rigors and severities, is a truth too manifest and too well established and confirmed by experience to be doubted of or denied: and (o) Cardinal *Bona* does readily acknowledge it. And therefore what ignorant and unfaithful Confessors and spiritual Directors are they, who suffer poor melancholick persons, and women especially, to be carryed away with the illusions of their phansy, or of an evil spirit, and to believe in earnest, that God the Father, or Christ, or the most holy Spirit should command them to undergo such terrible and unnatural penances, which belong not to the genuine temper and discipline of *Christianity*. At best they are but the com-

(o) De affect. spirituum, cap. 6. pag. 74.

mandments and ordinances of superstition, which prevails most in persons of weak and distracted brains, and of pensive and melancholick tempers, miserably misled and deluded with false principles and notions of religion. *They have indeed, as the Apostle Saint Paul speaks, Coloss. 2. 23. a shew of wisdom in will-worship and humility and neglecting, (or rather ἀπειθα, not sparing or punishing) the body, not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh,* that is, by treating the body so hardly and cruelly, and shewing hereby, that they do not the least honour to it, as being vile and loathsome; and that they will not satisfy the flesh in any of its natural and lawful desires: yet for all their high pretensions to a more perfect way of life, and of doing what is not commanded, and of a morose contempt of the world, and of the ordinary and sober practices of religion, fit only, in their esteem, for the ordinary sort of Christians, all is but a meer shew; there is folly, and vanity, and pride, and superstition in such like acts, and nothing of the Spirit of Christ.

Upon the whole, the serious Reader will be fully satisfied and convinced in his conscience, that

1. It is his duty, as he will answer it to God at the last day, if he fails in it, to continue firm and steadfast in the communion of the Catholick and Apostolick Church of *England*, as by law established, which is of such an excellent temper and constitution, that it favours not in the least any pretension to a private spirit, and is equally an enemy to superstition and enthusiasm, that governs it self, as to matters of faith and doctrine, by the scriptures, and the antient creeds, and the explication of general Councils, and Catholick tradition, that admits of no new discoveries of religion under the pretense of awakened reason, or new light, but retains the



the purity of the Apostolical doctrine and discipline, and teaches all of her communion, to worship God, as in a known language, so with a clear and enlightned understanding, and with sober as well as elevated affections, to make God's revealed will the rule and guide of their life, to be wise and discreet in their devotion, to yield obedience to the King and to the laws for conscience sake, and to remember the religion of an oath, and not by any trick or equivocation go about to take off the obligation of it: which was the cursed and ungodly doctrine and practice of several pretenders to inspiration in the primitive times, such as were *Basilides* and his followers, who, as (p) *Agrippa Castor*, a very antient writer shews, maintained, that it was indifferent in times of persecution, to partake of the Heathen-sacrifices by eating things offered to idols, and to abjure the faith, as if there had been no other design in their shameful apostacy, but to save their places and employments, and by their scandalous and most sinful compliances curry favour with the government.

(p) Euseb. hist. Eccles. lib. 4. cap. 7. διδάσκειν ὅτι ἀδιαφορεῖν εἰδωλοθύτων σπογανομάς, καὶ ἑξομνησίους ἀπαρρησάκτως τῇ πίστει, κατὰ τὸς τῶν διαγμῶν χρόνους.

2. That laying aside all pretensions to private impulses and immediate inspiration, the truest, the best, the most convincing proof and sign of our having the Spirit of God consists in a sound judgment, and a firm belief of the articles of the Christian faith, as it is revealed in the writings of the Evangelists and Apostles, in a sincere love of God and Christ, in purity of heart and mind, in piety and strictness of life, regulated by discretion and prudence, in a devout and diligent attendance on the publick worship and service of God, and frequent receiving the holy Sacrament, in frequent private prayer, in humility and brotherly love and charity, in obedience and

(a) Rom.  
8. 14.  
(b) Gal. 5.  
16, 18.  
(c) Gal. 5.  
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and submission to the government in all lawful things, and where ~~the~~ indispensable law of conscience will not permit, in suffering meekly and patiently, without the least repining or resistance, in justice, and temperance, and chastity, and in the practice of all moral and Christian virtues. Tho the extraordinary operations of the Spirit of God, which were so necessary in the first times of Christianity, have long since ceased, yet he continually sheds forth these blessed influences upon the hearts of the faithful. This is properly to (a) *be led by the Spirit*, and (b) *to walk in the Spirit*, and (c) *to live in the Spirit*, as the phrase is sometimes varied: and this is the most effectual demonstration of the holy Spirit of God his being within us, when he thus guides us in the way of truth and godliness; and may that good Spirit inspire us all, who profess and know the truth, as it is in *Jesus*, with holy thoughts, desires, and purposes, and by the continual assistance of his grace, enable us to bring the same to good effect, through the same *Jesus Christ*, our only Mediator and Advocate.

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